

# 転生したら スライム

That Time I Got  
Reincarnated as a SLIME

Story by Fuse, Illustration by Mitz Vah

伏瀬 イラスト／みつばー



GC NOVELS

転生したら  
スライムだった件 18  
Regarding Reincarnated to Slime

Story by Fusa Illustration by Milz Vah  
伏瀬 イストバ

伏瀬



「それでは始めよう」



# That Time I Got Reincarnated as a Slime

## Volume 18

Author: Fuse

Illustration: Mitz Vah

Translation: DeepL

Editors: CharVANDer, Voxel, gi2000

Redrawing: gi2000, Alexis

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# The End of Ambition

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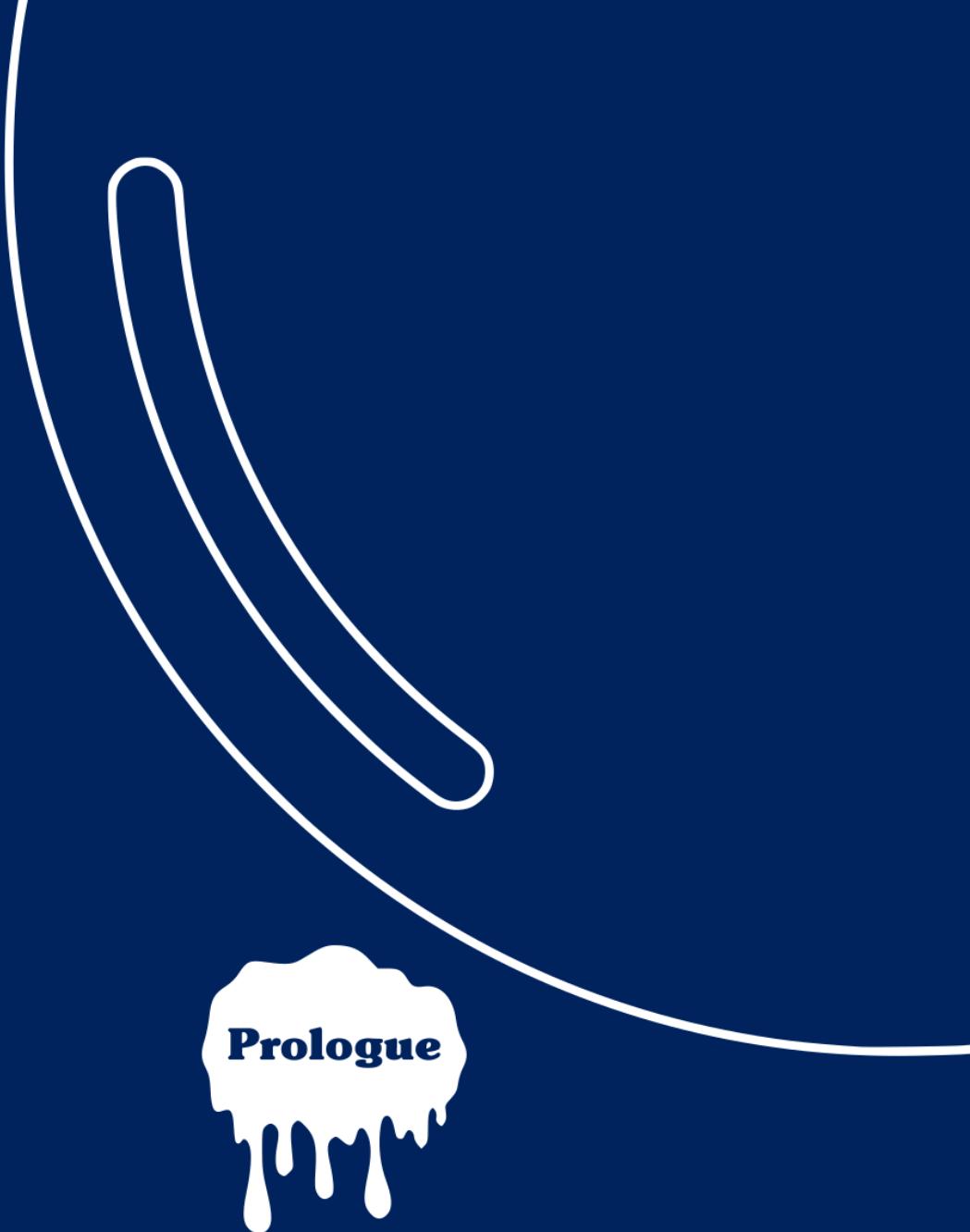
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**Prologue**

**A Clandestine  
Meeting**

*That Time I Got Reincarnated as a Slime*

# Prologue

## A Clandestine Meeting

While Rimuru and the others were waging a fierce battle against Rudra's forces...

Here, in the land of the Beast Kingdom of Eurazania, there was an uninvited guest. A gigantic structure known as the Sky Castle was currently in the process of being built at the hands of various majins. When the Eastern Empire invaded the Great Jura Forest, Geld, who had been in charge, left the construction site. Because of this, the main construction had been suspended. However, the rest of the work was still carrying on as usual with the remaining workers.

It was Obera of the Three Phantom Commanders who came to such a place. On the top floor of the Sky Castle, in the Sky Room known as a temporary office, Milim and Obera were confronting one another. The only other person present was Midley, who was standing behind Milim. All the others had been evacuated from the area, as they would not be able to help. Milim herself had sent Karion and Frey away and was not participating in the war. There were several reasons for this, but ultimately, the most important one was the defense of her country. When considering things from the Empire's perspective, she could not deny the possibility that the Empire might invade through her territory. Furthermore, if she took the initiative to join the war, that would mean laying her hands on humans, which was not her intention. So Milim chose to stay behind.

It seems that this was the right choice.

"What business do you have with me?" Milim asked, addressing the miscreant who had come to take advantage of the opportunity.

Midley quietly kept an eye on the proceedings, having absolute trust in Milim. He was simply waiting for Obera's response to Milim's question. And then there was Obera.

She removed the mythical-grade armor protecting her body and knelt down in front of Milim.



“It is a great honor to meet you, Dragon Empress Milim-sama. My name is Obera. Formerly one of the Seven Original Angels<sup>1</sup>, and a faithful apostle of Veldanava-sama, the Star King Dragon.”

Obera was a beautiful woman with wavy black hair like the night sky. Her eyes, which shone like the stars, were also beautiful and had a charm that could dazzle any who saw them.

Milim, who had been excited about the prospect of a fight, was set back by Obera’s unexpected behavior.<sup>2</sup>

“Huh?”

As she stood there confused, she felt Obera smiling at her.

“It is not surprising that you do not know me. When you were born, I was on a mission in the Otherworld.”

Obera expressed to Milim that she was sorry for the delay in greeting her.

*What do you mean by that?* Milim wondered.

“Your strength is pretty impressive—weren’t you planning to fight me?”

“Not at all.”

“Hmm. Then, what did you come here for?”

“To say my greetings and offer some advice.”

Obera raised her head and stared at Milim with a tense expression on her face.



The conversation resumed in the reception room, which had been temporarily set up. Obera introduced herself once more and elaborated on what was currently happening.

When Milim heard that her aunt Velgrynd, the Scorch Dragon, had fallen into Feldway’s hands, she wanted to run out to rescue Rimuru right away, but Obera warned her that it was too late to take any action at this point.

“What are you saying?! If this continues, my bestie Rimuru will—”

“It is too late now.”

At this response, Milim became furious.

“In that case, why didn’t you come here sooner?!”

“I am afraid I have no excuse for that.”

Even in the face of Milim’s furious presence, Obera hung her head, offering no excuses. Obera’s position is that of a subordinate of the Phantom King Feldway. At this moment, she was

<sup>1</sup>The general translation is “Shigen” (which can mean the “source,” or “origin”) “Nanatenshi” (which means seven angels). Together they can mean the Seven Original Angels (or Seven Angels of the Origin), kind of like the Primordial Demons, except the Japanese word they use for primordials is slightly different.

<sup>2</sup>Obera speaks with a very formal, humble, and respectful form of Japanese to Milim.

under orders to defend the Palace of Monsters<sup>3</sup>, and her visit to Milim was a serious violation of orders. Although she should have explained that, Obera only felt ashamed of herself for failing to live up to Milim's expectations. Seeing her penitent attitude, Milim had no choice but to quell her anger.

"It seems I've been pretty unreasonable. Thank you for letting me know."

"Those words alone are a reward."

As Obera continued to bow reverently, there was no sign that she was lying. Milim is able to see through the subtleties of a person's nature. She judged from Obera's attitude that she was acting from the heart.

"Rimuru is, by all appearances, a cautious person. I believe that no matter what happens, he will get through this safely. Yes, I have faith in Rimuru."

"Yes."

"If you say that you're not my enemy, then you should know that I won't allow you to mess with Rimuru."

"I'd like to say, 'I understand,' but I'm afraid that I cannot move freely. For now, I think it would be best for us to act within Feldway's trust...what will you do?"

If Feldway gives her an order, Obera says that she will obey. However, if Milim wishes, she is prepared to defect from Feldway at this time. Her hair was as black as the night sky, and her eyes shone like the stars.

"Hmm. I can't sense any lies in your words."

"By your will. The whole truth, it is my heart's desire."

"Then I ask you, what is your purpose?"

As soon as Milim asked, Obera began to speak without hesitation.

"Feldway seems to be plotting the resurrection of Veldanava-sama, but I consider that act to be irreverent. Your divine father will be resurrected without any help. And the fact that he cannot be resurrected easily must be because of some reason. It is very, very difficult for one like me to discern God's will."

In other words, Obera believes that rather than trying to revive Veldanava, Milim, his daughter, should be crowned Lord.

"You're on my side?"

"Such arrogance is beneath my diminutive frame. I wish to be your tool. I have nothing to ask of you, and it gives me the greatest pleasure to be of service to you, so please command me."

Everything was as Milim wills it. That was Obera's intention. Milim understood this but was puzzled by Obera's resolve.

"If that's the case, then you're willing to betray Feldway?"

"Well, that is just a difference of opinion. Rather, it is Feldway who is disobeying the will of Veldanava-sama," Obera affirmed.

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<sup>3</sup>The word used is (妖異宮) which I think translates to something like Yoki Palace or Monster Palace.

The tone of her voice was proof that she was serious.

“I believe that Veldanava-sama’s will is for the happiness of you, his daughter. I am convinced of this, and therefore have no compassion for those who would do you harm.”

In other words, this is a story before a betrayal. To Obera, who believed that Feldway’s actions would be harmful to Milim, her colleague was nothing but an enemy. However, Obera was wise. Instead of acting on her own, she had the wisdom to leave everything to Milim. She took great care to ensure that her actions did not interfere with Milim. That is why she risked her life to meet Milim. She would not do anything if Milim so wished, but if she was ordered to, she would bare her fangs at anyone no matter who they were. This was the true nature of the Three Phantom Commanders Obera. Milim was not blind to this.

“Very well. Then I will trust you and make you one of my subordinates. Midley, is that okay?”

“Of course, Milim-sama. I don’t think there will be any objections.”

“Okay! Then, Obera, you are one of us starting from today. They are not here right now, but I’ll introduce you to Karion and Frey once the war is over!”

“Thank you.”

“Wahahahaha! Now, with Midley as the leader, I also have the Four Heavenly Kings. I’ll have to show off to Rimuru!”

As soon as Obera decided to join, Milim laughed heartily. She had decided to call her subordinates the Four Heavenly Kings in order to compete with Rimuru’s Four Heavenly Kings, which she had been secretly jealous of. If Frey had been there at the time, the idea would definitely have been rejected. But fortunately for Milim, Midley was the only one present.

“I’m the leader! Well, that’s only natural. No one knows Milim-sama better than I do!”

For Midley, whose number one priority was always Milim, there was no way that he could oppose her, especially if he were to be given the leadership of the Four Heavenly Kings. Rather, he was overjoyed and agreed immediately. Thus, Milim’s Four Heavenly Kings were established.



Obera, who was suddenly appointed as one of the Four Heavenly Kings, showed no sign of being upset and accepted. Milim’s words were the will of God. Because of that, Obera gave priority to Milim in everything. However, a vexing problem arose here.

“Well, now then...What should we do with Obera? That is the question. It’s at times like these that I wish I could consult Rimuru...”

“Hmm, that’s a difficult question for sure. Should we have her stay here, or should we have her remain in the enemy camp and work as a spy?”

Either way, there are pros and cons. She really should think it over carefully, plus Milim wanted to hear from Karion and Frey as well. If possible, she also wanted to consult Rimuru. Unfortunately, Milim and Midley were the only ones here.

“What about you—what do you want to do?”

Midley was not the intellectual type, so he was not the best person to consult with. Milim, who was well aware of this, asked Obera directly instead of relying on him.

“As for me,” Obera replied without hesitation, “I would like to return to the Palace of Monsters. I haven’t manifested my body here, so if I stay, I’ll have to force myself to materialize my body. Moreover...”

Obera’s role was to deal with the cryptids in the other world. Strictly speaking, monitoring the movements of Ivarage, the World-destroying Dragon, was her primary mission. Cornu’s primary mission was to invade other dimensions, and Zalario’s was to deal with the insectars. With the pact between Phantom King Feldway and Insect Lord Zelanus, Zalario was now able to move freely. However, it was still difficult to communicate with Ivarage, and Obera’s body remained bound.

“Insect Lord Zelanus and the World-destroying Dragon Ivarage? They sound strong!”

“Yes. Zelanus is one thing, but Ivarage is very nasty. A world-destroying malevolence in itself, where coexistence is impossible. It is allowed to exist by Veldanava-sama’s will, but must still be prevented from being released from the Otherworld.”

If she stayed here, Ivarage’s surveillance would be neglected. Obera wanted to make sure that Ivarage would not affect Feldway’s plans.

“I see. Then you should keep on watching him.”

“As you wish.”

“But then, I wonder...what does Feldway plan to do with Ivarage?”

“Hmm, I am wondering the same thing.”

They were unaware of Feldway’s plans, so their questions were only natural. Then Obera disclosed all the information she knew.

“Feldway was given the task to monitor Ivarage by Veldanava-sama. However, he intends to abandon that mission in favor of resurrecting Veldanava-sama. We are currently expanding the Underworld Gate, and as soon as it is complete, we plan to invade this Cardinal World with all the phantoms and insectars.”

“So, the expansion of the Underworld Gate was a long-term plan.”

“Yes.”

“But what are you going to do after that? Won’t Ivarage be released as well if you can’t close the opened gates?”

“That is a possibility, and I told Feldway as much. But he didn’t care about that at all. I cannot understand what he’s thinking.”

“Huh?”

“Feldway is crazy. It is safe to assume that he is willing to let the world be destroyed as long as Veldanava-sama can be resurrected.”

Feldway hated this world for taking Veldanava away from him. He intended to remake the world, leaving only those he had selected. If Ivarage destroyed the world, that may even be convenient for him.

“In other words, we’ll be the ones in trouble then, right?”

“What an annoying situation. Zelanus seems to be troublesome, he should just be sealed up in the other world...”

Milim and Midley look at each other in disgust. They had promised to play with Rimuru and the others, but the war had forced them to postpone. On top of that, Milim’s mood had taken a nosedive with this new problem.

“In that case, I’ll just have to send Feldway flying.”

It was an easy snap decision on Milim’s part.

“That’s right. Then Milim-sama, I, Midley, leader of the Four Heavenly Kings, would like to receive the orders to defeat Feldway!”

Midley, who lives for Milim, agrees without thinking.

“Yes! I’m counting on you, Midley. I’ll be heading into battle as one of the generals. We’ll crush Feldway’s ambitions with our own hands!”

“Hahaa—yes!! I am looking forward to it so much that my arms are tingling! I’ll show you what I can do!”

With Frey out of the picture, it seemed that no one could stop these two from running amok. But then, Obera spoke up.

“Please wait. I have been sharing information with Feldway and the others since the start of the mission, and it seems that Emperor Rudra captured Velgrynd-sama’s Dragon Factor. However, at the last minute, Demon Lord Rimuru interfered, and the final plan was suspended.”

That was enough information to make Milim calm down.

“So Rimuru is safe?”

“Yes. The mission is now over, and Feldway is pulling back to base.”

“Hmm...In that case, it’s too soon to make our move.”

“Ah—hmm, Midley’s right...”

With their momentum suddenly sapped, Midley and Milim regained their composure. They had time to spare before Feldway began his next operation. It would be better to work with Rimuru and the others rather than to force something at this point. In any case, it was important to share all of this information first. Milim did not fail to understand this.

“Then Obera, you will keep an eye on Feldway’s movements until I give you an order.”

“As you wish.”

“Keep in contact with ‘Magic Communication.’”

“Understood.”

Milim and Obera adjusted a special wavelength that would work only between the two of them. It would take a lot of magic to cross dimensions, but with their level of skill, it would be no problem. In this way, a means of communication was secured. After such a series of exchanges, the meeting came to an end.

“Now then, I will take my leave.”

After saying that, Obera departed. Milim and Midley, who were left behind, were troubled by the prospect of a new conflict.

*That Time I Got Reincarnated as a Slime*

Chapter  
1

Walpurgis

# Chapter 1

## Walpurgis

The destination through Raine's portal was a silvery world of ice and snow.

Unlike last time, it seemed that the venue was to be Guy's palace.

Raine guided me as I stepped inside.

Shion and Diablo followed.

Although the outside was too frigid for any living thing to survive, the temperature inside of the castle was comfortable. However, half of the castle had collapsed and it was obvious that something had happened.

"Hey, so you're here. I'm sure Milim and Dagruel will be here soon, so make yourself comfortable and wait for them."

Guy told me as he led me to the room.

There were several round tea tables in a large hall that looked as if it could be used for a ball. Chairs were also placed irregularly, so that we could sit freely.

Looking at the guests, I saw that Luminas and Leon had already arrived.

Behind Luminas was Pope Louis and the old butler Gunther.

Behind Leon were the two knights, Alrose and Claude, both fully armed.

I was a little relieved to see familiar faces. After a brief exchange of greetings, I took a seat. Shion and Diablo seemed to refrain from sitting down and waited behind me instead.

I wish they would sit down too, but I'll let them do as they please.

And then, Ramiris made her loud appearance.

"Hey, what's the deal with you leaving me behind?!"

Ah!

I thought we had gone together, but it seems that Ramiris was left behind.

"Wha-what? Ramiris-sama, why weren't you with us?"

I wasn't the only one who was caught off guard. Raine, who had been guiding us, was flustered as well. She seemed to have assumed that Ramiris was following her and was surprised to see her getting angry.

"Raine, it is unlike you to make a mistake. I received an urgent request from Ramiris-sama

to pick her up.”

It was Mizeri who said this.

Just like Raine, Mizeri’s face was battered and bruised, though her expression remained sharp.

I had initially thought that those two were similar, but...Perhaps it was because I didn’t have the luxury of time until now, but the differences in their personalities stood out clearly.

“Raine-chan, you seem to be distracted because of your injury! I was just worrying about who I should take with me, you know! But even so!”

I noticed that Ramiris had two attendants with her.

Beretta and... *Hey!*

“Veldora, what are you doing?”

Luminas reacted to my words and turned to look behind Ramiris. She saw Veldora standing there and clicked her tongue, making a disgusted face.

“Tsk, that evil dragon.”

“Kuahahaha! I heard that there was some kind of important meeting going on, and I just couldn’t miss it. I was actually planning to follow Rimuru, but was too late, so I quickly stopped Ramiris and offered to join her!”

Veldora did not read the atmosphere.

He didn’t care that Luminas was in a bad mood and was confidently making his point.

Ramiris followed suit.

“That’s how it is! If Master is willing to join us, it’s like having the help of a hundred people, so I hope you’ll thank me for bringing him here!”

Beretta was the only one shaking his head and lamenting, but there seemed to be no stopping the two of them.

“I am very sorry<sup>4</sup>. I was careless...”

“No, no, it’s not Raine-san’s fault. We came here in a hurry as well.”

Raine looked depressed, so I comforted her for the time being.

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<sup>4</sup>Raine says “moushiwake gozaimasen” which is a very formal way of apologizing. It can also translate to “I have no excuses to offer for what I did.”



“Well, since I called you here, it was only natural to hurry. Rimuru, didn’t I tell you before that you may address Raine and the others without honorifics?”

Oh, I forgor.

“Guy-sama is right, Rimuru-sama. Please call us by our names.”

“That’s right. It makes me happy to feel more familiar.”

Mizeri-san seems to understand me very well.

There are two ways in which I address others with honorific titles.

The first is when I want to keep an eye on someone, and the second is when I want to keep my distance from them.

When I’m not close to someone, or when I should be wary of them, I think it is rude to refer to them without their honorific titles. It’s also partly because I don’t want to be disliked and partly a calculation so as not to antagonize them.

On the other hand, when I get close to someone, I naturally call them by his/her name.

There are a few people like Haruna-san or Treyni-san, who for some reason make me want to use the “-san” honorific, but those people are exceptions.

Putting those thoughts aside...

At this time, more voices from some unexpected people were heard.

“Rimuru, you’ve been calling me by my name too,” Luminas added, “so it’s probably a little late for that.”

“That’s right,” Leon said. “You’re so brazen, I don’t think that you can fix it now.”

I was convinced that they were right.

“All right, then. In that case, I’ll just call you all by name from now on<sup>5</sup>. ”

I said so and accepted Guy’s and everyone’s offer.



Mizeri and Raine went out to meet Milim and Dagruel.

Everyone else relaxed and waited. There were snacks on the table, so we spent some time reaching for them.

After a while...

“What’s going on, Guy? I’ve also got a lot on my plate. You can call for me, but you should at least contact us in advance! Frey says that’s good manners.”

Milim arrived, looking full of energy.

She was still as noisy as ever, which was very typical of Milim.

“Is that so, Frey?”

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<sup>5</sup>He’ll refer to everyone by name without the polite honorifics. Basically, he’ll be more familiar with everyone.

“Well, yes. Guy-sama.”

“Frey, as I was saying to Rimuru, no honorifics, please. The same with Karion and you guys there. Any of you in this room deserve it.”

Oh, Guy just said something I didn’t expect...I am convinced too. Everyone in this room is strong.

If I had to choose, I’d say that Leon’s followers were inferior in terms of magicle quantity, but their skills still seemed to be quite good.

On top of that, Frey-san had awakened into a “True Demon Lord” and had reached the Million-class. It was unknown how strong she had become, but she was not someone to be mocked as a mere subordinate.

As if she was aware of this, Frey-san nodded.

“Oh, thank you. I’ll freely call you as such, then.”

Frey-san responded, looking around Guy’s castle.

Karion followed suit, addressing Guy in a dignified manner.

“I’ve never been good with honorifics, so it’s nice of you to say so. So, Guy, what kind of business did you call us in for today?”

Like Frey-san, Karion was also in the millions-class. He had always had the aura of a king from the start, so his irreverent attitude felt forgivable.

When our eyes met, he greeted me with one hand raised in the air.

Guy responded to Karion with a wry smile.

“Well, wait just a minute. Dagruel will be here soon, so we can talk then. But still, I’m surprised. Not only Karion, but Frey has awakened as well.”

Well, one would notice. I had heard it from the reports, but after seeing him in person, I can tell that he’s become far stronger than before.

“Thanks to you. Perhaps it’s exactly as Milim calculated, but this war has helped me overcome my limitations as a harpy.”

Frey-san smiled, and Guy nodded in satisfaction saying, “That’s what it means to climb to the top.”<sup>6</sup>

“Well, I guess I’m the same way. I was able to get rid of the shame of the beastmen, and I guess it’s not all bad to play along with Milim’s schemes.”

Karion laughed out loud.

“Whaaat?! I don’t know what you’re talking about!”

“Meh, don’t try to hide it Milim. You must have thought that if we remained weak, we’d die in future battles, right? That’s why you gave us the chance to fight the humans.”

“That’s right. If this is the world Rimuru-dono wants, we wouldn’t have been able to get the souls needed to awaken. Perhaps this was your last chance?”

“That ain’t right.<sup>7</sup> Is that so?”

<sup>6</sup>The word Guy uses is Chōjo (重畳 or ちょうじょう) which means to superimpose, or place/pile up on top of the other. DeepL/GoogleTL used the sentence “That’s a superposition” but that didn’t make much sense to me.

<sup>7</sup>Karion uses a slang term here “Chigē nee na (ちげーねえな)”

“Ah—Ahh! I don’t know. Stop talking nonsense and just sit down!”

Milim’s attitude as she shouted was, by all appearances, one of embarrassment.

‘So that’s what she was trying to do,’ I thought to myself.

But that’s beside the point.

“Um, Frey-san. You don’t have to address me by ‘-dono’ or any other honorific title.”

I was trying to make a point, but Frey-san snickered at me.

“Rejected. You are a friend of Milim-chan, our master, so you should be respected as well.”

No, no, but you call Milim so informally too.

I don’t find that very convincing...

“If that’s the case—”

“Also, you’ve been referring to me with honorifics as well. Can you stop that?”

I got caught in my own line of questioning.

Frey-san’s request was a difficult hurdle for me.

Karion is one thing, but I don’t feel comfortable calling out to Frey-san so casually.

How do I put it, is it the aura that I’m not good with?

Whenever I am in front of a beautiful woman, I feel debilitated<sup>8</sup>.

Milim is a child, and Luminas is a beautiful young girl, so it’s safe. If they had been more mature, I might have had a little trouble reacting.

If the person was as disappointing as Shion though, the hurdle would be instantly lowered and I would be fine.

“Ahahaha! Rimuru, so you’re not good with adult beauties, huh?”

He saw through me?!

“That’s good. Whenever I need to ask you for something, I’ll just take the form of a beautiful woman.”

“I don’t need that kind of attention! If I know that it’s you, I won’t be happy about it!”

I was so annoyed that I lost all my tension.

That’s why I completely ignored Guy’s words and spilled out my true feelings.

“Fufu, of course! After all, Rimuru-sama has a beautiful secretary like me.”

Wait, you’re going to say that about yourself?

“Kufufufu. Guy, you’re being a bit presumptuous if you think that Rimuru-sama would be interested in you. In the first place, I can easily learn to transform myself into a woman, and if Rimuru-sama wants me to—”

“I don’t want you to, so this conversation is over.”

Diablo was more dangerous than Shion.

He was about to say something crazy if left alone, so I swiftly ended the conversation.

Seriously, my subordinates are so much trouble.

I regretted for a moment that I didn’t bring Benimaru with me instead.

Meanwhile, Dagruel had also arrived.

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<sup>8</sup>The word used is “Ishuku (委縮)” which can also mean shriveled, deflated, atrophied, etc. (simp)

He didn't bring any companions, but even by himself he looked very intimidating.

"Oh, man, it's a hell of a mess. Could it be that this meeting is really serious?"

That was the first thing Dagruel said as he sat down on the large chair that Raine guided him to.

It was interesting because the chair looked distorted even though it was made of massive stone.

In any case, no one had mentioned it, but I still noticed it.

No, everyone had definitely noticed it.

There was also a big crack running through the walls of this hall. Just by looking at it, it was obvious that something had happened.

Because I knew that it would be very troublesome, I had been diverting the topic to avoid facing the reality.

It was an escape to avoid getting involved in the situation, but now that everyone was here, there seemed to be no choice but to get down to business.

"Well, things have gotten a little complicated. For once, I seriously want to borrow everyone's wisdom."

"Hoh, that's a pretty big deal, coming from you."

Guy nodded, and Dagruel turned serious.

He must have read the situation and decided that things seemed seriously troublesome.

It wasn't just wisdom he wanted to borrow, I thought, with a faraway look in my eyes.

I wasn't the only one, but Guy stood up and announced with a smile.

"Now then, let's change venues. Let us have an important discussion with our highly cooperative "Octagram," first!"

Cooperative?

'Don't sleep-talk' I almost muttered to myself.

That smile gave me a bad feeling, but...sadly, there seemed to be no way to refuse, so we all reluctantly followed Guy's lead.



The venue was a hall with a round table that seemed to be isolated from the outside world.

The fact that drinks had already been prepared for us was quite impressive.

Guy sat at the top, and I sat opposite him.

From my point of view, Milim was on Guy's right and Ramiris was on his left.

To my right was Leon. Between Milim and Leon was Luminas, and on the other side was Dagruel.

Ramiris' chair was small, but the seat was higher than the top of the round table. And since

Dagruel's chair was several times heavier than usual, the arrangement was well balanced.

As soon as I sat down, it was obvious that there was an empty seat between me and Dagruel.

"By the way, I don't see Dino, do we have to wait for him?"

Dagruel asked the obvious question.

The other demon lords seemed to be curious as well, and their eyes focused on Guy.

"Ahh, that's right."

Guy looked at me.

I immediately had the feeling that he was aiming towards me<sup>9</sup>.

"Rimuru-kun."

Guy seemed to know about Dino's betrayal after all. I didn't know what kind of an information network he had, but the fact that he was talking to me suggested that he had a grasp of the situation to some extent.

"Yes, yes. You want me to explain, right? Dino was a traitor. That is all!"

"Too brief! Be more polite and detailed."

"Damn, it can't be helped..."

It was useless to resist any further, so I gave up and decided to explain.

I told them that Dino, who was staying in our country, betrayed us and turned to the enemy's side. However, I did not hide the fact that it was probably due to the influence of Michael's "Ultimate Dominion," regardless of his intentions.

"Dino changed sides..."

Dagruel muttered to himself as he finished listening to my story. Dagruel, who was a good friend of his, must have had some thoughts on the matter.

"Even though he's changed sides, it seems like he's still in control. I haven't confirmed his intentions, though."

"Michael, was it? Are you trying to tell me that a mere Skill has a will of its own?"

Oh, so Guy didn't know why Dino betrayed him either.

"That's right. There's no doubt about it. At this point, he's developed an ego, and has taken over Rudra's body, acting as Michael."

Because I also have a partner, Ciel-san, we have the best evidence of that.

"Wait, Rimuru! Did you say that the Ultimate Dominion<sup>10</sup> affects the skills of the angelic system? Then the question is, how do you tell the difference between angelic and demonic when the concepts are so vague?"

Oh, Luminas made a good point!

That's what I was wondering as well.

Just as I was thinking that, Guy stood up.

<sup>9</sup>The word used is "hokosaki (矛先)" which can mean many things such as "aim of attack," "point of a spear" or "force of argument."

<sup>10</sup>The term "Ultimate Dominion" and "Regalia Dominion" both showed up as Michael's skills. It was confusing me at first, but I believe that the "Ultimate Dominion" is the skill Michael uses over the angelic systems, and the "Regalia Dominion" is the skill he uses over everything else.

“I’ll explain it to you.”

Then Guy started talking about Skills in surprising detail. It seemed like a huge secret, a secret about the way the world worked, but he was generous enough to share it with us.

According to him,

The laws of this world were established by Veldanava, but it seems that anyone with the right administrative power can influence those laws.

Even if you don’t have that power, you can still rewrite the laws to some extent by intervening with your wish in magicules. In other words, this was the concept of magic, a kind of power.

A Skill is something that has been systematized to a certain extent so that it can influence these laws.

Skills that reside in the soul of the strong-willed and are activated by their pure energy—that is the Ultimate Skill of the angelic system created by Veldanava, and among them are the seven powers called the Virtues.

“When I fought Veldanava, he had many powers, but after the world was stabilized, he left only the strongest one, the ‘Justice King,’ and gave some of them away, releasing all that remained into the world. As a result, those powers were taken into the circle of reincarnation and appeared in the world in the form of qualified and strong souls. However, the Ultimate Skills were too strong, and were restricted to the unique level. They can be scattered among various Skills, or become a ‘Virtue’ type Unique Skill while retaining a certain amount of authority.”

I felt like the Virtue skill system was in contrast to the Deadly Sins skill system. In other words, there was the virtuous system and sinful system, or the angelic system and the demonic system.

But, well, from the way Guy was talking now, it seemed like there were not seven Ultimate Skills in the Virtue system.

The ‘Wisdom King Raphael’ I got was also an evolution from ‘Great Sage,’ and it seemed to have nothing to do with ‘Virtue.’

I’m a simple guy, so I was convinced by Guy’s explanation, but Luminas asked a question again, as if there was nothing to hide.

“Guy, if you know something, tell me. Are there seven angelic system skills in total? And what are their powers?”

Now that you mention it, I was curious about that too.

Of course, the other demon lords seem to be feeling the same way.

“Huh, you’re all united like never before. All right then, I’ll tell you. First, the seven virtues of the angelic system...”

Guy was very knowledgeable.

The seven virtuous powers that Veldanava was said to have possessed.

According to Guy’s description:

- Ultimate Skill ‘Justice King Michael,’ its command is Mental Control itself, the strongest power specialized in the chain of command with a real ‘Absolute Defense’ like the ‘Castle

Guard.'

- Ultimate Skill 'Knowledge<sup>11</sup> King Raphael,' the power to manage the laws of the world, specializing in support.
- Ultimate Skill 'Covenant King Uriel,' a power that specializes in spatial management and is used for the management of all events.
- Ultimate Skill 'Hope King Sariel,' the source of life, and the power to manage the circle of reincarnation.
- Ultimate Skill 'Purity King Metatron,' the power to sort out all mixed laws, prevent interference, and select pure energy.
- Ultimate Skill 'Charity King Raguel,' the power to provide support and amplification to others. It has been given to Velgrynd.
- Ultimate Skill 'Patience King Gabriel,' the power to fix the status and respond to unforeseen circumstances. It has been given to Velzard.

That's how it was.

To tell you the truth, I was surprised to find out more than expected.

"That is the breakdown of the skills, but only three of them are known to exist at this time. Veldanava gave his 'Justice King Michael' to Rudra, so he got his 'Covenant King Uriel' back in return. That is the one that Rudra acquired and made ultimate. There probably would have been some changes in performance. Well, that's lost now, so we can't be sure."

No one interrupted.

And so, Guy continued.

"I knew that 'Justice King' Michael who went to Rudra had the power to dominate others, but it was more powerful than I thought."

It was there that Guy faltered.

While I waited for Guy to say something, our eyes met.

"You know Rimuru, don't you?"

Well, there was no reason to lie here.

If I could, I'd have liked to pretend that I didn't know anything, but I can't do that. Because I didn't talk about the Ultimate Dominion properly in my explanation earlier, I'd give my take on it.

Now that the problem had grown so large, I thought that covering it up would only make things worse.

"Ah. I know him, or rather, I fought him just the other day. When Veldora was influenced by the enemy, I thought it was all over."

Velgrynd had been influenced too.

"I see."

"I had such a hard time because you pushed me into trouble! You didn't just get me into a fight with Rudra, you got me into a full-scale war!"

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<sup>11</sup>Different from Wisdom King, for some reason to be explained later.

I'll argue the point that must be made.

But well, to Guy that was nothing.

"Ahahaha! It's fine because you won."

"No, it's not! Ramiris' labyrinth was destroyed by Velgrynd, and the area around our town was turned into a hellish scorched earth. Well, the restoration is going well, but I will never accept requests from you again!"

I got swept up in the momentum and yelled out.

With this, I hope he will not ask of me any unreasonable requests for the time being.

"Hmm, you've been doing that sort of thing with magic for a while now. Oh well. So, what's your conclusion?"

"I was slurring my words earlier when I said 'influenced,' but I'll rephrase it correctly. Michael's "Ultimate Dominion" is a heinous power of absolute control over the holders of the Angelic Ultimate Skills."

"That's ridiculous—"

"That's hard to believe. A person who reaches the ultimate skill must have a strong mind. Human or demon, it's the same. To be completely dominated—"

"Accept it. The proof is that not only Veldora, but also Velgrynd were placed under Michael's control. I wouldn't have believed it if I hadn't seen it with my own eyes."

Or rather, I still didn't want to believe it.

It was like a nightmare, something I never want to experience again.

"Rimuru's story is true. As proof, Velgrynd has 'Charity King Raguel' and Velzard, as I said, has the Ultimate Skill 'Patience King Gabriel.'"

That's how it is.

I suspected as much.

Judging from the collapse of this castle, there must have been a fight with a hell of an opponent.

I didn't want to admit it, but it seems that Velzard had been taken over by Michael.

My bad prediction had come true, and I felt depressed.

"Hey, Guy! In other words, are you saying that Velzard-dono has turned against us?"

"That's right, Dagruel."

"No way! That's a big deal!"

Guy's affirmation upset Dagruel. Since they've known each other for a long time, I guess he knows how dangerous Velzard is.

On the other hand, I don't know her that well...

I'm sure she's dangerous, but I'm not sure how dangerous she is. I couldn't set a threat level because I couldn't really feel it.

"—Just asking, but could you possibly have defeated and locked her away somewhere...?"

"Rimuru, do you really think that such a convenient story exists?"

So there wasn't.

I was annoyed that Guy was so appalled and that my wishful thinking was shut down.

“This sucks. Michael’s team now includes Velzard-san...”

I couldn’t help but mutter to myself something that echoed the mood of everyone else.

“...Good grief.”

Leon seemed distressed as well.

“I suspected as much, but this is unfortunate.”

Luminas also had a dark expression.

I think that was only natural. But I don’t think he’ll be able to beat us because he had let Guy escape without a fight.

“Don’t worry! There are still seven of the eight stars left here. Besides, the others are strong enough too! Let’s go on a rampage and show them what we can do!”

Why does Milim look so happy?

As I thought, there was definitely something wrong with the True Dragon’s blood.



Well, everyone all knew that the situation was the worst, but there was still some more unpleasant information to add.

“Now, to continue answering your question as to whether there are a total of seven angelic Skills, the answer is no.”

“Mmm... This is the worst.”

Luminas looked displeased.

“Well, do you know how many of the Angelic Ultimate Skills there are?”

When Dagruel asked, Guy answered gravely.

“I don’t know all of them either. When I fought Veldanava, I couldn’t even see the bottom of it. He told me about the Seven Virtues. He also said he was going to give each of the Seven Primordial Angels a special power.”

Silence enveloped the room.

In addition to the seven virtues, one for each of the seven angels, that would make a total of fourteen...

“You make it sound like he didn’t give one to all of them...”

“That’s right, Dagruel. The angels back then had weak egos, and some of them couldn’t handle an Ultimate Skill. That’s why Veldanava gave Velzard and Velgrynd ‘Patience King Gabriel’ and ‘Charity King Raguel.’ It seems that he also granted skills to the eligible angels, but released the rest of the skills he didn’t transfer.”

He left himself the ‘Justice King Michael,’ which he traded for the ‘Covenant King Uriel’ that Rudra later acquired.

And then, when Veldanava died, the ‘Covenant King Uriel’ was also lost. It circled around

and eventually became my power, and was now merged with Velgrynd's Divine Flame King Cthuga.

This is not the time to be escaping from reality by mulling over history. I feel that I have to keep it a secret for sure.

In any case, now I can see the whole picture to some extent.

"In other words, the angelic Skills are pure skills created by Veldanava, and it is possible that there were at least 14 of them. And whoever manifests and acquires them will not be able to resist Michael's Ultimate Dominion, right?"

"That's right."

I summed it up, and Guy nodded his head in agreement.

Which brought me to my next question.

"Wait, wait, wait. The angelic Skills are okay, but what about the demonic skills?"

Oh, Ramiris asked exactly what I wanted to ask.

All eyes focused on Guy.

"That's a tough one to answer, but listen. I gained the Unique Skill 'Pride' when I was defeated by Veldanava. I had been observing him, trying to emulate his strength, and I think that's the secret."

"What do you mean by that?"

"Ramiris, your skills were born with you so you may not realize it, but acquiring Skill is influenced by one's wishes. It still depends on the individual, though."

After answering that, Guy gave a brief explanation on Skills.

A Skill is normally found in the material body, the spiritual body, or the astral body. However, there are some special cases where the skill will reside in the soul itself.

Naturally, because the soul is so close to the essence of the person, the desire is greater, and it makes sense that the thing inhabiting the soul would become a powerful skill.

In addition to this, consider it in combination with Ciel-san's view.

It is true that there was something in a Unique Skill that resided in a material body.

The Unique Skill 'Berserker,' for example, is easy to understand because it was inherited by Razen who took Shogo's body.

There are various examples like that, but I agree with the opinion that the power rooted in the soul is more powerful.

It's easy to hide, so it's hard to be stolen, and it can also be a trump card.

In that case, the Ultimate Skill is probably a soul-level power, and I think that's why the number of people who can handle one is limited.

But that's not all. There are two ways to take root in the soul, not just "dwelling" but also "being engraved."

Ciel-san, for example, is completely assimilated to my soul. It is impossible to separate the two, so I don't have to worry about it being stolen. Still, I think it's safer to keep it a secret.

This is also the case with an Ultimate Skill.

If it is only dwelling in the soul, it might be stolen, but if it is engraved, there is no need to

worry about it.

However, that would be impossible to detect...

While thinking like this, I listened to everyone's conversation.

"Which brings me to my earlier point—"

"You said that the power Veldanava unleashed was taken into the circle of reincarnation and came to reside in a strong soul."

"Yeah, that's right, but in my case I didn't receive any of Veldanava's power. I wasn't given any special powers by Veldanava like Ramiris. It's a power I created myself. You get it? By imitating pure power, a Skill was born. And that is—"

'The demonic system,' he said.

"I see. So then my 'Lustful King Asmodeus' is just an imitation, a degraded version, isn't it?"

"No, that's not the case. If a Skill is the result of your own will and desire, it has the same power as the original. I didn't want to tell you this, but my 'Pride' has evolved into the Ultimate Skill 'Pride King Lucifer.' That power is comparable to the angelic system, and the strength of will is what decides victory or defeat."

"Guy, it's just like you to say that... Well, okay. Just to confirm, according to you, there are at least fourteen demonic-system Ultimate Skills, right?"

"Probably. Just as demons were born from angels, demonic skills are born from angelic Skills, at least that's what I think."

Hmm, I guess my prediction was right.

There are too many connections<sup>12</sup> in this world.

If there is a cause-and-effect relationship between hero and demon lord, it's not surprising that there would be the same kind of relationship between Skills.

"At the very least, Veldanava's seven virtues must have been paired with the deadly sins that evolved from the seven deadly sins."

It seems that Guy's 'Pride King Lucifer' is paired with Rudra's 'Covenant King Uriel.'

From there, here is Guy's prediction.

- Ultimate Skill 'Justice King Michael' is paired with 'Wrath King Satanael'
- Ultimate Skill 'Knowledge King Raphael' is paired with 'Gluttonous King Beelzebuth'
- Ultimate Skill 'Hope King Sariel' is paired with 'Sloth King Belphegor'
- Ultimate Skill 'Purity King Metatron' is paired with 'Lustful King Asmodeus'
- Ultimate Skill 'Charity King Raguel' is paired with 'Greedy King Mammon'
- Ultimate Skill 'Patience King Gabriel' is paired with 'Envy King Leviathan'

He said that each of them might correspond to the other.

As for me, I was at a loss for words because I had a Skill that had already been sacrificed.

I'd be in big trouble if I made this public, but even if I didn't say anything, I'm afraid it'll still be a problem.

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<sup>12</sup>The word used is "In'nen (因縁)." Other similar translations are "ties, fate, links, destiny, etc.

At times like these, Ciel-san was conveniently silent, so I decided to wait and see.



After Guy's explanation on Skills, it was time to get back on track.

"To add on to Guy's explanation, it seems that angelic Skills have "control circuit" of absolute command built into them, and if you have one, you are unable to resist Michael's orders. Dino was probably turned for that reason, so don't think of him as an ally if you meet him."

"That's a pain. That bastard might not be the brightest, but he's stronger than you think."

Dagruel growls at my words.

Ignoring him, Luminas added in gloomily.

"What's more troubling is that Velzard-dono is on the side of the enemy. Velgrynd-dono too, perhaps?"

Dagruel also thought that this was a bigger problem.

I wanted to pretend that I didn't know, but I'd have to inform them about Velgrynd. Ramiris already knew what was going on, so they'd find out anyway.

Just as I was about to open my mouth, Leon made a sharp point.

"Wait, I don't care about Velgrynd's story at this point. What we should be doing right now is checking whether or not anyone else has an angelic Skill."

That's right.

As expected of Leon, getting straight to the point.

The ex-Chosen Hero was overflowing with courage.

"Leon, I was hoping you'd bring that up!"

Guy looked pleased.

When I was thinking of the content of today's meeting, I knew that this would be the most important issue.

The only question was who was going to bring it up?

After all, doing so would mean doubting your friends.

The only way to prevent that would be to reveal your own hand.

That's why Guy and Luminas had been revealing their powers earlier.

Those of us who were able to read the situation would have spoken up before being suspected.

Well, I guess I was a little late to the party...

"Wait a minute! You're not suspecting me, are you?"

"It's fine. You've been excluded from the start."

That's right.

Because Ciel-san had also assured me that Ramiris' power was of a separate category.

Ciel-san said that her power was not given by Veldanava, but rather it was a part of her power that she lost when she was no longer a deity.

Having heard that, I did not doubt Ramiris either.

“Wahahaha! I’m different. I don’t really understand my power—”

“Don’t worry about it, Milim. A power with that kind of ridiculous power would definitely be a Skill paired with the Ultimate Skill ‘Justice King Michael.’”

In other words, the Ultimate Skill ‘Wrath King Satanael.’ I don’t know what kind of power it is, but it doesn’t seem to be completely under control.

“Then next is me. Actually, I don’t have the same type of relationship with my Skill as you all do. I’m more like Ramiris. I was born with this power too.”

We all fell silent at this statement, but I felt that he was not lying.

As evidence, Milim, who had a keen sense of intuition, remained silent.

“I believe you, Dagruel.”

“So do I! I do too!”

“Hmm, if Rimuru and Milim say so, then I’ll believe it too.”

With this, the trust of 3 out of 7 people was obtained.

Including Dagruel, we had the majority, but there were still more supporters.

“Hmm, I will trust you too.”

“Hold on, I’ll believe in you too in that case!”

Leon casually dismissed his suspicions against Dagruel, and the opportunistic Ramiris expressed her desire not to be left behind.

With this, only Luminas remained.

“Tsk, I’d love to take down Dagruel right now, but I guess I’ll have to give up this time.”

“Gahahah! Luminas, this is what natural virtue<sup>13</sup> is called. Too bad!”

“So noisy! If you’re actually being manipulated, I’ll laugh at you for being so weak.”

Dagruel and Luminas don’t seem to be on the best of terms. And yet, there seems to be a strange amount of trust between them.

Well, maybe it’s just my imagination.

Anyway, Dagruel is now cleared of suspicion.

Luminas had declared herself to have the Lustful King Asmodeus, and Guy had declared himself to have the Pride King Lucifer.

That just left me and Leon.

Let’s take the initiative here.

“Ah, I’ll keep quiet. I have a lot of skills, but I don’t want to tell you!”

I announced this with a smile.

After all, my Skill is weird.

Ultimate Skill ‘Void God Azathoth’ and ‘Fertility King Shub-Niggurath’—I don’t think such information should be made public. Even if I tried to describe them with a serious face,

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<sup>13</sup>The word used is “Jintoku (人徳)” which can also mean “benevolence” or “goodness.”

people would only think I was showing off<sup>14</sup>.

I was sure that no one would trust me, so I exercised my right to remain silent... Is what I thought, but apparently that was not allowed.

“You can’t pass with that reasoning!”

It was easily rejected by Guy.

Oh, so that was no good after all?

No, there was still a chance.

“Wahahaha! I believe in Rimuru, so it’s okay if you don’t tell me! But only if you promise to give me some honey later!!”

Whether she’s dependable or calculative, either way, Milim was on my side.

“In that case, I’m okay with cake. Three days’ worth!”

Ramiris can also be bribed.

Three days’ worth will be a pain, but I’ll take it.

“Okay, I accept! I’ll promise Milim three large jars of Apito honey and Ramiris three days’ worth of my dessert!”

I said so, and nodded my head.

“Just leave it to me! I’m declaring that Rimuru is okay!”

“Of course! Rimuru is the one who revealed the secret of the angelic system in the first place. I don’t think there would be anything to be gained by revealing your hand, so you can’t be under control!”

Oh, Ramiris made a good point!

She’s not usually like that, but sometimes she can be smart.

Perhaps it was just too sound of an argument, so the remaining demon lords began to look convinced.

“Hmm, I guess you’re right. If the one who trusted me was betraying me, that means I would also be under suspicion. In that case, I should trust Rimuru!”

With a hearty laugh, Dagruel made his decision.

With this, we now have a majority of the votes. That was including myself, so it would be perfect if just one more person supported me.

With that in mind, I glanced at Luminas.

“...What? There is no way that I could possibly be bribed—”

I won’t let her finish. I’ll end it here.

“Shuna has designed a new swimsuit.”

“...What?”

She took the bait!

Ufufufu. As I thought, it seems that Luminas is more susceptible when you attack her from the inside.

“In cooperation with Ramiris, we’ve also created a seaside beach in the labyrinth.”

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<sup>14</sup>This originally translated as “people will think I’m licking my chops” but that made no sense at all.

“It was done to perfection!”

“It’s a paradise with a completely private area...”

“Rimuru, I think you and I are going to have to have a long talk.”

“The transparent sea water gently envelopes you when you swim. The sun shines brightly, but you won’t get sunburned because it’s inside a labyrinth. Of course, you could tan your skin in any way you wish.”

“Wait, wait.”

“Beautiful women who expose everything in a sense of liberation, all in a place different from the rest of the world—”

“Okay. I have some requests and ideas, so I’ll visit you after this meeting is over. Are you sure you can make the time?”

“Of course. In that case—”

“I understand. I have believed in Rimuru from the very beginning.”

Yes!

I unintentionally made a fist-pump, but now my victory is assured.

“...Hey, hey, are you for real? Is this how you want to play it, guys? I can’t believe you Octagram are so easy to manipulate!”

Guy glared at me with resentment.

But that doesn’t matter.

Victory is justice.

“Guy, you have no choice but to admit defeat. I’m not convinced either, but it’s obvious that Rimuru is not being controlled.”

Leon’s regretful voice was soothing the soul.

With this, I had succeeded in dismissing my suspicions.

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Now Leon was the only one left.

“So, Leon. What about you?”

“My Skill is the Ultimate Skill ‘Purity King Metatron.’”

“ “ “...” ” ”

Leon answered Dagruel’s question in a very simple... Huh?

What did he just say?

The Ultimate Skill ‘Purity King Metatron’ is an angelic Skill, isn’t it?!

I can’t even begin to describe the feeling of helplessness that everyone exuded.

“Hey, hey, Leon. It’s rare to see you make a joke. But still, this is a serious meeting. Calm down and give us an answer one more time.”

“Guy, I don’t have time for this either. The ‘Purity King Metatron’ that we’ve been talking about is my Skill.”

I’m sure everyone was thinking that this was a big problem.

Just when I thought the meeting would be coming to a close, a huge problem arose.

“Well then, what should we do?—Hey, Rimuru-kun!”

“Don’t dump this on me! You’re so obvious that you don’t even bother to hide the fact that you’re forcing me to do everything for you!”

“That’s you, you bastard! Quit complaining and just think of a solution!”

“Hey, don’t start such an ugly argument with me!”

“Wahahaha! But you know, Luminas...I understand how Guy feels. Rimuru can be very helpful in times like these!”

“That’s right! Just leave this to Rimuru, and we’ll have a cup of tea or something!”

Selfish colleagues.

And Ramiris, you’re especially terrible. I’ll be sure to remember this.

This is why demon lords are so scary. What kind of cooperation is this?

In the midst of all this, Dagruel spoke up in exasperation.

“Rimuru, you’ve had it pretty rough. I’ve felt closer to you ever since I heard that you were forced to take care of Dino, and I feel sorry for you this time too.”

He was such a good guy.

He’s a giant and a demon lord, but appearances can be deceiving.

“Dagruel-san, thank you!”

“The “-san” is unnecessary. I’m sure we’ve brought this up before.”

That’s right.

I should be aware of the fact that I’m a demon lord by now.

I think being too humble can be harmful in certain situations.

“Then once again, thank you Dagruel!”

“Hm, don’t worry about it. Anyway, is Leon all right?”

Dagruel nodded lightly, and the conversation returned to the topic at hand.

Luminas also joined in, as if they were on the same page.

“That’s right. He looks the same as usual, but it’s important to know whether or not Leon is under control, right?”

Everyone’s eyes focused on me.

It’s best to ask the person himself about such things, but he doesn’t seem to be aware of it. If that’s the case, I’ll just have to guess, but before I do, there was something I wanted to confirm.

“As I said before, when Dino betrayed us, the labyrinth was destroyed and the enemy was able to invade. We believe that he came into contact with Phantom King Feldway.”

“Once they were inside the labyrinth, complete isolation from the outside was impossible. That’s why, although they didn’t seem to be able to talk directly, they might have been able to communicate through ‘telekinesis’ or something.”

Ramiris added to my explanation.

For the time being, it seems that she was willing to work.

While considering Ramiris' nice assist, I asked Guy.

"So, I'd like to ask—what happened here? I know that Velzard-san became an enemy and went on a rampage, but I want to know how it happened."

"So you know about it?"

"Yeah. I think anyone who saw this mess would recognize it."

It was obvious to me that Guy and Velzard had fought. Otherwise, there wouldn't be such a mess.

What I'm curious about is how it happened, or rather, how Velzard fell into the hands of the enemy.

Is it possible to send a command to the "control circuit" from anywhere, or is it necessary to get closer to a certain extent?

Depending on the answer, the threat level will be different.

Also, Velzard and probably Dino were given their powers by Veldanava, while Leon acquired it on his own and brought it to the ultimate level. While his "control circuit" might not have disappeared, there is still the possibility that there is a glitch.

If so, that would explain why Leon's commands might not be going through. In any case, it's important to get accurate information first.

"You're right, that bastard Feldway broke through the Ice and Snow 'Barriers.' It was Mizeri and Raine who greeted him, and I thought I'd go out and give him a thrashing. But then Velzard got in the way."

Hmmm...

"In other words, he didn't make direct contact, but he came close. It's the same conditions as Dino, but I'm not sure what to make of it."

"So, you're saying they need to get within a certain distance to interfere with the control circuit? You don't think that this might be a trick to make us think that, do you?"

"Something like that."

"Leon, do you feel anything about yourself?"

"I don't feel anything. I'm just me, and I don't feel like I'm being controlled by anything."

Leon replied confidently, but even Lieutenant Kondou and Velgrynd had not been aware that they were being controlled. It was impossible to trust that statement.

"In other words, your beloved is me—"

"Idiot, of course it's Chloe. I don't even care about you."

Oh, he's fine.

This bluntness is undoubtedly Leon's true personality.

Also, it's not as if there's no evidence to support it.

«Feldway's words are recorded in the labyrinth.»

Yes, that's right.

When Feldway confronted Chloe, he said, ‘Hahaha Hahahaha!! Oh, so there it is. After all, even Veldanava-sama wishes for my victory!!’—That’s what he said.

From what he said, we can infer that even Feldway and Michael do not know who possesses the Angelic Ultimate Skills.

There is no guarantee that this was not an act, but there is no point in doubting it. Because my intuition is telling me that it is safe, I should proceed towards believing in Leon.

«Using ‘Predation’ on Leon and destroying the “control circuit” itself is a sure way—»

Ciel-san interrupted me quite casually, but I refused to accept it.

I didn’t like the idea of predating Leon, physiologically speaking. Maybe that’s why I wanted to believe in Leon even more than I did before.

“Okay, we’re not going to come to any conclusions by talking about it here, and although I’m skeptical, I personally think it’s fine. So, let’s just judge Leon as “gray close to black” and see what happens!”

I declared as such.

“Is it okay, then?”

At Guy’s questions, I nod my head.

“I’m not completely sure yet, but I don’t think the enemy has grasped the locations of the angelic Skill users.”

“What is the basis for saying so?”

Dagruel asked curiously, so I presented my own thoughts.

“In Ramiris’ labyrinth, there are records of the battles with Feldway and his men. From what they said, I’m guessing that the only Skills they know of are those that were given directly by Veldanava. If the Skill is self-acquired, they probably won’t know about it unless they get close.”

“That’s right! It’s annoying that someone can so easily read information from my labyrinth, but it’s being put to good use, so I’m not complaining!”

To put Ramiris in a good mood, I nodded and said, “You’ve been a great help, seriously.” It was true that the labyrinth was superior in every way, so I thanked her without hesitation.

“Feel free to praise me more!”

And so, Ramiris was delighted.

I brushed off the comment and returned to the topic at hand.

“It’s not like Leon’s been spreading the word about his skill, so I think it will take a while for people to know about it.”

“It would be a foolish thing to do, to expose one’s hand, except under such circumstances.”

Leon muttered to me in resignation.

“I see.”

And so, Guy seemed to be convinced.

“Certainly, Leon is right. Well, there is a good chance they’ll see through us if they get too close, and I agree that we can’t be absolutely sure, but it would be foolish to be overly cautious and split up.”

“Hmm, I have no objection to that either.”

Luminas summed it up, and Dagruel agreed. The two of them seem to be on the same page, despite their differences.

It was interesting to see them scowling at each other in a not-so-amused manner, but they seemed to have no issues, since they hadn’t lost their cool while fighting.

“I trust Rimuru’s word, and Leon’s word is not a lie!”

Milim gave her seal of approval, and just when I thought the matter was settled, Ramiris muttered something unnecessary.

“That’s right. Leon-chan may need to be monitored, so the question is who will take care of that!”

If I say anything right now...

“Rimuru-kun.”

“Enough. I get it, so don’t say anything else.”

As expected, I gave up and decided to take over the Leon surveillance mission.



“Dino’s departure couldn’t be helped, but I guess that means the seven of us here are now friends. And I think everyone understands that we’ve got a nasty enemy on our hands.”

As for how we’ll keep an eye on Leon, we’ll talk about that later.

“So, Guy, what are you going to do about Michael?”

I focus on Guy’s remarks.

“Ah? I’m gonna destroy him, of course.”

“Hmm. So it’s all-out war then.”

Luminas muttered in contemplation, but it was also the consensus of everyone present.

“Wahahaha! I’m excited.”

“It’s time to show them what I’m made of! Whether it’s Feldway or Michael, I’ll beat them with one punch!!”

“Hmm, Phantom King Feldway, huh? Now that he’s back, it’s inevitable that we will have to fight for control of the earth.”

Milim’s words aside, Ramiris was being too grandiose and unrealistic. But, well, even if one punch was impossible, the labyrinth is super important, so I stopped making fun of her.

“Do you know how powerful the enemy is?”

When Leon asked, Guy shook his head.

“We know that the Seven Primordial Angels, including Feldway and Dino, and Michael, who has replaced Rudra, are all generals.”

“Hmm, in addition to that, Velzard-dono is now an enemy as well. This “Tenma Great War” is going to be pretty tough.”

Hmm?

“Tenma Great War?”

“That’s right. Isn’t the war, which takes place every five hundred years or so, essentially Rudra’s ability to summon angels?”

Dagruel’s answer came as a surprise to everyone, including me.

“What?! Dagruel, don’t talk nonsense!”

Luminas snapped at him, but it was Guy who stopped it.

“Calm down Luminas, Dagruel’s words are correct. Rudra has the Skill ‘Army of Angels, Armageddon,’ which allows him to summon an army of angels and control them at will. Although, it seems that Rudra has difficulty controlling it and has only issued simple commands.”

Guy explained to everyone that its activation cycle was about every 500 years. However, because the summoned angel would have no body, it could only last a week at most before disappearing.

It’s a new thing to consider, but I wish he had told us this earlier.

“I have a question.”

“What is it?”

“Do angels, like demons, take root in the world when they incarnate?”

Oops, I didn’t even have to ask.

Benimaru’s wife Momiji’s race, the tengu, was born from the incarnation of an angel into a wolf. It was not surprising that many such races were born during the war.

If that’s the case, then I just can’t shake this bad feeling.

«It was the forbidden spell ‘Dead Birthday.’»

You’re amazing, Ciel-san.

You knew exactly what I was thinking.

“Looks like you’ve got something on your mind. Tell me, I’ll listen.”

Guy asked me, so I answered without hiding it.

“You guys know Kazalim the Curse Lord, right? The truth is, Kazalim is being controlled by the enemy, and they’re mass-producing undead elves...”

I ordered him to interfere with the ritual every chance he got, but I’m not sure how effective that was...

“‘Dead Birthday.’ How many tens of thousands died?”

“Yuuki’s Mixed Corps sacrificed about 60,000 people, so I’d say nearly ten have been born at most.”

“Hmm. So he prioritized the individual instead of the number. In that case, he’s at least as

powerful as Clayman. It's a perfect medium for the Primordials to incarnate.”

Oh, Guy's got it wrong.

I have other concerns, so I'll correct him.

“No, not that. The Seven Primordial Angels already incarnated long ago. It seems Feldway and the others were incarnated in the other world. And Dino's colleagues—”

I think their names were—

“Pico and Gracia!”

Yeah, that's it!

Ramiris helped me out again, so I'm grateful.

“So then, what you're worried about is—”

“Yeah, I think the higher angels summoned by the ‘Army of Angels, Armageddon’ will be incarnated in the undead elves. Angels don't have much of an ego, right? So, if you use the soul of someone with a strong ego as the core, you could create a powerful new race that also incorporates the power of the angels.”

“ “ “ ... ” ”

Not only Guy, but all the other demon lords also fell silent.

After a few seconds, they looked at each other and said things like, “No, no, that's...” or “It's scary that you would come up with such an idea.”

I wasn't saying this because I wanted to. It's just that I had come up with the possibility.

“Rimuru-kun, do you think the probability of that happening is high?”

“That's why, don't talk to me like that as if to put the blame on me.”

“I get it. So, what do you think?”

“I'd try it if I was them. If you fail, the only thing being wasted would be some of your undead elves.”

“Well, I'd do that too. There's no point in having a bunch of weak minions.”

As Guy and I nodded at each other, the other demon lords looked at us as if they were in shock.

I don't understand why.

I'm sure anyone would do that to increase their strength...

“Don't look at me like that! We don't actually know what's going on, but we should assume the worst, right?”

When I shouted this, opinions began to fly out, led by Luminas.

“That is true, however...”

“You're still crazy. What scares me is that you think you can handle it even if it happens.”

“That's right, Rimuru. The superior angels are the seraphim, but surely someone as powerful as Clayman could withstand their power. That would make them become as powerful as an awakened demon lord.”

“Hmm. If many beings like Dagruel are born, then we can't be too careful. At the very least, Louis and Gunther will have a tough time.”

It wasn't so much a complaint about me as it was a complaint about the difficulty of dealing

with them.

“Guy-san. Everyone seems to be unhappy. As the organizer, you should give them a good talking to.”

“Hey, I told you not to use “-san” in these situations, didn’t I? We’re all on equal footing here, okay? It wouldn’t hurt for you to deal with it!”

“Shut up!! You’re the one who’s putting the “-kun” on me. In the first place, why do I have to draw the short straw?!”

I shouted what I wanted to say without hesitation.

Now that I felt refreshed and calm, I was okay with Guy even though he scares me.

“It’s not a problem. We’ll just blow them all up!”

“That’s right! We even have Master Veldora here, so I don’t think we have to be so scared.”

For this meeting, Milim and Ramiris are always optimistic.

They look so happy, it really is enviable.

Incidentally, Veldora, the person Ramiris is relying on, is probably reading the scriptures (manga) in another room. Recently, he’s been reading a long historical work, saying that it might give him some great wisdom.

I’m sure he’ll come up with some kind of “trap of justice<sup>15</sup>,” and it’s going to be my job to figure it out, so I don’t feel like getting my hopes up.

Anyway, I’ll just consider it a blessing not to be disturbed.

“The situation is not that simple. In addition to Velzard-dono, isn’t Velgrynd-dono in the hands of the enemy, as well? Even if we have the Veldora, the enemy will still have the advantage! In the first place, I don’t like relying on that useless dragon.”

That’s right. Veldora doesn’t seem to be very reliable.

He’s too timid in front of his sisters, and he was also recently captured by the enemy...

“Ah, Velgrynd-san is fine.”

I was letting my mind wander, so I answered absent-mindedly.

Needless to say, that was a mistake.

“How can you be so sure?”

By the time I realized it, it was too late.

I was planning to be more discrete with my information, but now that I’m here, I have no choice but to be honest.

“Due to various events in her fight against me, Velgrynd-san has broken free from the Ultimate Dominion. And now that she no longer has the Ultimate Skill ‘Charity King Raguel,’ she doesn’t have to worry about being controlled by Michael anymore.”

“ “ “Haah?!” ” ”

The only thing I can do now is play it cool.

“Well, it sure was difficult. I was so focused that as soon as I realized it, I found myself in a good position to win!”

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<sup>15</sup>孔明（こうめい）の罠（Koumei no wana). I think Koumei means fair/justice, so a “Trap of Justice” is what I used. Sounds like something Veldora would come up with after reading manga.

The suspicious looks I was getting from the demon lords was painful.

However, if I lose here, then they'll probably make me confess everything.

"What the hell did you do?"

Surprisingly, even Guy is shocked.

"That's a trade secret..."

I must remain absolutely silent about my skill.

It's hard to believe, so it would only arouse more suspicion.

What's more, if Leon was actually under control, my power would be exposed to the enemy.

I think I might be worrying too much, but this is the only decisive way to prevent that from happening.

"Tsk! As always, you're full of baloney, stingy bastard..."

It's not a matter of being stingy.

It's also a strategy.

"No, no, no, Dagruel aside, haven't we all experienced the evolution of a Skill?"

"I've never experienced anything like that."

Yup, of course.

Some troublesome points were made, but I will continue the explanation without paying attention to them.

"Velgrynd-san was in a similar situation, and suddenly came to her senses during the fight against me. She said that 'Charity King Raguel' evolved at that time."

I gave a little—rather, a largely embellished explanation, but it seems that everyone understood what I meant.

"Well..."

"I don't remember it either, but I think there was something like that."

"Hmm...It's not unheard of for skills to evolve in the heat of battle. It's not normal, though."

"That was the case with me. Between life and death, I bet everything I had on my potential. As a result, I received the 'Purity King Metatron,' a decision I don't regret to this day."

He seems to have been convinced in light of his own experience.

That's a relief.

If I pretend that I haven't heard about Velgrynd's current powers, I'll be able to pretend that I don't know about the Ultimate Skill 'Divine Flame King Cthuga.'

As a matter of fact, Ciel-san did it, so it's not my fault either.

"—I thought the Ultimate Skill was the pinnacle, but I guess there is still further to evolve. Tsk, I still have a ways to go. I guess I was too proud to think that this was my limit."

Guy muttered, and the topic came to a close.

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Although I felt that this discussion was not moving forward very well, I reviewed it again.

Identifying the enemy's forces is important, so we must not spare any effort.

"So, Velgrynd is really okay now?"

"Yeah. She's protecting Chosen Hero Masayuki now. Masayuki and I have a friendship, so we'll help each other out if the other gets in trouble."

"So then, they can be counted as an asset (war potential)?"

Hmm, I'm wondering if this is a selfish decision, but I'm sure they'll help us if we ask.

"Isn't it better just to avoid being hostile? At the least, I don't want to fight them again."

"You're right. It's not often that anyone can beat that thing, so you've done well. Now that Velzard has turned against us, we can't let Velgrynd turn against us too."

Guy looks annoyed, but I'm sure he means it.

After all, half of the seven of us here are unlikely to be able to take on a True Dragon.

The only ones who can are me, Guy, and Milim.

Then next would be Dagruel after that?

Anyway, it's good news if we can reduce the number of unnecessary enemies.

Oh yeah, then there's one more thing.

"Since we're on the topic of Velgrynd, I'll mention it here. Of the Seven Primordial Angels, there are four that have crossed over to the other world, including Feldway, but three of them attacked Ramiris' labyrinth."

"That's right! Of course, I was able to drive them away with my own strength."

Ramiris nodded her head, as if my comment had reminded her.

I quickly continued my explanation so as not to interrupt the conversation.

"Well, regardless of the truth of it. They called themselves Phantom King Feldway and his 'Three Phantom Commanders.'"

"Yeah. They've been trying to destroy the humans of our world since ancient times. We call them demons<sup>16</sup>, but they're actually phantoms."

"I thought that all enemies of mankind were called demons, but I guess that wasn't the case. That said, one of the Three Phantom Commanders was destroyed by Velgrynd-san, so keep that in mind."

I think it was Cornu, but it seems that he touched Velgrynd's reverse scale when he taunted Masayuki. I sensed that Velgrynd had gotten stronger, but even I was surprised that she was able to strike a blow against someone as strong as the Three Phantom Commanders.

However, Cornu seemed to be less dominant than Zalario, let alone Feldway. That was my impression from the way Cornu behaved in the video recording. At the least, as a result of analyzing the information left in the labyrinth, Ciel-san judged that Cornu was inferior to me in terms of strength, even though we were almost even in terms of existence value.

The rationale behind this is unknown, but I trust them.

Therefore, we should never underestimate our opponents, but there is no need to be wary

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<sup>16</sup>Mazoku (魔族).

of those who have perished. That's what I was reporting.

"Anyway, Cornu is probably dead. I've known him for a long time, but I don't feel anything for him."

Guy laughed in an unconcerned tone.

It's just nice to have fewer enemies.

It was very much like Guy, so I tried to move on to the next report without any particular surprises.

But then, Milim intervened.

"It's just the right time, so I have something to report!"

That's what she said, so I decided to listen to Milim.

"Actually, Obera, of the Three Phantom Commanders, has offered to join me. The meeting was held in secret, so Feldway and the others should not have noticed!"

It's not that I let my guard down, but I was unable to react to the report.

I was like, "Oh, I see."

"As expected of you, Milim. How'd you get her to do that?"

"Yeah, let's hear it. Obera wasn't as narrow-minded as Cornu and she was a very serious woman. I don't think she had anything to do with the betrayal, so how did it come about?"

Guy and I asked Milim in perfect synchronicity.

Our eyes met, and that was enough for us to understand each other's thoughts.

In other words, we were worried that Milim was being deceived.

We nodded at each other.

"It's my natural charm. She came to me because she understood how great I was!"

'It's hard being popular'—Milim laughed, but I didn't take it for granted.

"Calm down. It could be the enemy's plan."

Guy rebukes, but Milim doesn't listen.

"It's all right. Obera wasn't lying."

"Well... But you know, Milim, there is a very simple strategy called 'poison burial'<sup>17</sup>, which is introduced in the scriptures (manga) of the Three Kingdoms, and sending spies to the enemy camp has been a common practice since ancient times. Contacting us at this time, when we are about to start a war, is like asking us to be suspicious, isn't it?"

Right now, Veldora is reading about this.

'Now I'll be familiar with strategy,'—is what he said, but if it were that easy to train a military strategist, I wouldn't be having such a hard time.

In the first place, his worldview is too different, so I think he's only useful as a reference.

Anyway, it was suspicious, so I tried to persuade Milim.

But Milim only smiled fearlessly.

"It's okay. I had my suspicions too, so I discussed it with Karion and Frey. And we all agreed that we should trust Obera."

<sup>17</sup>Maifuku no doku (埋伏 (まいふく) の毒). Doku = poison. Maifuku = impaction, pressing, burial, etc. I think it's referring to invading enemies attacking/killing from the inside like a poison.

Hmm, well, Milim is not a fool, so she probably did what she had to do. If Karion and Frey-san share the same opinion, then maybe we should trust them.

“What kind of discussion did you have with Obera?”

—I asked for the time being.

“Well, that’s—”

After hearing Milim’s story, we would make our own decision as well.



“I see, Obera is monitoring the movements of Ivarage, the World-destroying Dragon, in the Palace of Monsters. In that case, she can’t afford to do anything either way.”

That was Guy’s conclusion after hearing Milim’s story.

Ivarage and the cryptid subordinates are a non-negotiable army of destruction. If Obera made a move, Ivarage might be resurrected, so they would normally be excluded from the invasion force.

However, there was something that bothered me.

“If Feldway is willing to let the world die as Obera says, wouldn’t he be willing to unleash Ivarage on us?”

Feldway and Michael are hoping that Veldanava will be resurrected, but it will be terrible if that doesn’t happen. Hope will be lost and a desire for destruction will arise.

There is nothing more frightening than a man who does not care about the future.

That’s what I was thinking, but—

“That’s the point, Rimuru. I can’t believe that idea.”

I thought it was a perfectly legitimate opinion, but surprisingly, it was very unpopular. Starting with Luminas’ remarks, Dagruel also criticized me.

“That Feldway isn’t stupid enough to use a monster that’s stronger and more uncontrollable than he is.”

Oho, so Ivarage is stronger?

“It was dreadful back then. Guy took care of it, but I also helped to keep the planet from falling apart!”

“Gahaha! Ivarage’s destructive power can shatter the stars if he’s not careful. If we fight him carelessly, we’ll be in big trouble.”

“If you can only destroy the enemy, then what would you do after that? If this planet is destroyed, it will no longer be a matter of world domination.”

I see...I guess my assumption was too naive. From what I’ve heard about Ivarage, he seems to be a ridiculous monster.

“Wahahaha! There’s no shortage of opponents. If he comes out, I’ll take care of him this

time!"

"Rejected."

"It's rejected."

"It's a rejection."

"Milim, I know you're strong, but you're not careful enough. I'm probably not the one who should be saying this, but you need to be more considerate of the damage you do to those around you."

"Uhh, I've already learned how to do that. That's why Ivarage—but with a twist—"

"Yes, yes, I understand. Seriously though, if Ivarage does come back, I'll be the one to deal with him. I've been wanting to get rid of that bastard. Next time I get the chance, I'll definitely get rid of him."

Guy proclaimed as such in a voice so cold it was frightening.

Naturally, no one could argue with that. Milim was not happy, but she agreed to let Guy deal with Ivarage.

Then, the conversation returned to Obera.

"Can't you ask her about the enemy's situation or something?" Dagruel asked Milim.

"I asked her, but she doesn't seem to know about the forces gained in our world. Feldway is suspicious, so she may have been wary of asking the wrong questions that might lead to false assumptions."

"Well, Obera is right. Feldway is a sharp man, and he doesn't like his subordinates to think too much."

"So, they're just supposed to do what they're told?"

I asked while thinking about my old troublesome boss.

Guy answers me as I think nostalgically about the old days.

"Not exactly. If you're doing your best on a given mission, you don't have time to worry about others. That's just the way he thinks, and that's why Obera's response is correct."

If she was trying to fool us, it would have been better to use false information to gain trust. Instead, she said she didn't know, which seemed to increase Obera's credibility even more.

Even so, I don't think Feldway and I are going to get along.

"To be so self-righteous that he can't think of his subordinates as anything but pawns. He seems to believe that everything he does is right."

And, I can't help but spill my true intentions.

Guy, who heard this, smiled at me.

"Is that a sarcastic remark meant for me?"

"No, it's not!"

Yikes, how dangerous. Right here is a guy who's beyond just being self-righteous, he's dictatorial. In Guy's case, he doesn't even seem to consider the demons under his command as pawns. A careless remark like mine could very well bring out his fangs.

I'll just cover it up and continue.

“For the time being, I’m more inclined to trust her, so I guess we’ll wait and see.”

When I said that, everyone nodded.



Now that the Obera matter was settled, I returned to the main topic.

There have been too many detours, how difficult.

“Ugh, this meeting is not moving forward at all. No one’s hiding any more secrets, are they?”

I couldn’t help but complain, at which point everyone all rushed in.

“ “ “You have no right to say that!” ” ”

That’s fair.

I’m the one who seems to have the most secrets, so that statement was a mistake.

While reflecting on that, I turned my attention to the meeting.

For now, Luminas was in charge.

“Anyway. We don’t know each other well, so we can’t cooperate. So, I will summarize the situation.”

She began by listing the enemy forces. Leading the enemy forces was Michael. Under his control was the Frost Dragon, Velzard. Then there was Phantom King Feldway. Under his command was Zalario of the Three Phantom Commanders. Then the insectar that Zalario was monitoring, and also their ruler, Insect Lord Zelanus. Zelanus might have his own subordinates, but since Obera doesn’t know much about them, it remains unclear. To be honest, this is the force that I was most worried about.

After all, all of the insectar majins I know are extremely powerful. Zegion and Apito aside, there was also Razul, the guardian god of the West, and Minaza, the sixth-ranked Single Digit that Shion had defeated. Zelanus himself seemed to be dangerous, but he also seemed to have strong subordinates, so we had to be careful.

Then there’s the Dino, Pico, and Gracia trio.

The fact that he (Dino) is an awakened demon lord is troubling enough, but we don’t even know if he has an Ultimate Skill. It would not be surprising if he possessed one, so it would be better to estimate his strength on the assumption that he does.

And finally—

“An undead elf with an angel incarnating its body that could rival us. Hmm, that’s tricky. I’d feel a little better if I at least knew how many of them there were.”

“That’s extravagant. It’s lucky that we’ve even found out this much. We should be thinking of countermeasures.”

Luminas rebuked Dagruel for his complaint.

“Do we have an idea on who should deal with whom?”

It was Leon who said that.

It might be a waste of time to decide, but it is not meaningless.

“Well, at the very least, it would be best if Leon didn’t have to deal with Michael.”

I agreed with Dagruel.

That should absolutely not happen, as it would only lead to manipulation. Rather, we should cooperate with each other as much as possible to prevent such a situation.

I was concerned about the possibility that not only Michael but also Feldway had the ability to control him, but after gathering various information, I found out how the skill worked to some extent.

“Listen, Michael’s power is transferable, and it seems like he can give control to a certain level. That’s why I think we need to keep Leon away from Feldway as well as Michael.”

Just like with Lieutenant Kondou, Feldway should be considered to have already borrowed Michael’s Skill.

“It’s annoying. If they take control of Leon as well, then the disparity between our forces will become even greater.”

While I listened to Luminas muttering, I remembered something else that I had forgotten to mention.

“Oh yeah, Leon wasn’t the only one in danger.”

“Mmm? What do you mean by that?”

“Well, as I said, Veldora fell under the enemy’s control during the battle the other day.”

“...I’ve been curious about that story. You should tell us more in detail.”

Luminas listened back with a stunned look on her face.

That’s why I explained that Michael had the power of absolute control called the “Regalia Dominion.”

As for Chloe, she had already dealt with herself, so I’ll put her on hold. If things got really bad, Ciel-san would have intervened forcibly, so I believe it’s safe to leave her to her own devices.

Thus, I explained about Veldora’s situation.

“ “ “...” ” ”

“Rimuru-kun. You were the one who asked if anyone had any more secrets, weren’t you?”

Oh crap.

“No, did I say that?”

“You said it!”

“You did say it.”

“You did.”

“You definitely said it.”

There was no one on my side.

I desperately tried explaining that “It wasn’t a secret or anything exaggerated, I just forgot to say it,” but no one was convinced.

‘You already knew, Ramiris’...I thought to myself, but pointing that out would not improve my situation. Knowing this, I gave up and said I was sorry.



The other demon lords were getting irritated, so it was harder than I expected to deal with the situation.

Anyway, I was finally able to get back to the main topic, but the situation really was pretty bad when I thought about it.

If our strength was ever reduced, then the enemy’s strength would also increase. It was like a shogi game where only one of the sides had the ability to reuse pieces, which was a condition that made it hard to imagine winning. It’s my fault that I forgot to explain it, but I’m sure that it’s not an easy story for people to hear.

“So, there is no one here who is being controlled by the ‘Regalia Dominion?’”

“It’s okay. The control of one with an angelic Skill doesn’t seem to have any subjective symptoms, but in the case of ‘Regalia Dominion,’ it is a forced dominion, so the ego disappears and the reaction is unnatural. In any case, since Veldora and I were connected by a soul corridor, he told me himself that he had been taken over.”

“I see. In that case, how did you free Veldora?”

“That’s—”

This question again?

‘I ate him, and Ciel-san did a Skill Alteration.’—but I didn’t want to be foolish and explain it that way.

They wouldn’t believe me anyway, so I had no choice but to fake it.

“It’s just like with Velgrynd-san. In the heat of battle, Veldora evolved his own powers. I guess it was the power of friendship.”

“ “ “ ... ” ” ”

Their gazes were painful.

I’m aware that they’re looking at me very suspiciously, but I have no choice but to push through with this explanation.

“Hey, I fought Velzard pretty seriously too, but she didn’t show any signs of evolving her skills, you know?”

“Well, I suppose there will be individual differences.”

I’m saying this myself, but it’s an impossible explanation to believe.

“Individual differences, huh?”

Is it no use?

They’re getting suspicious. What should I do?

Even if they wouldn't believe me, I could just tell them the truth. But if I did that—

«In addition to forcing you to deal with all those who are under control, they will dig deeper into the Master's Skills.»

Just as I thought.

In the first place, it's impossible for me to explain how it works, because Ciel-san was the one who did it, not me.

I guess the right answer is to keep quiet after all.

“That's enough. You don't seem to want to talk anyway, and you've probably done something out of the ordinary. If you can tell when someone is under control, then the Regalia Dominion is no more of a threat than the Ultimate Dominion. The question is, how do we deal with them?”

Luminas decided that it was overall better that we were able to recognize the difference. She then said that we should discuss how to deal with Michael and the others.

I nodded my head in agreement.

“Rather than deciding on who should deal with whom, isn't it better to decide on how to move when they attack?”

Guy nodded at my words.

“I agree. The enemy isn't stupid, so I don't think they'll try to spread out their forces.”

If the size of the enemy is too large, or if an opponent you're not good with is attacking you, it is important to immediately call for help.

However, there was a problem with this.

“That's true, but we're pretty spread out, aren't we? Or should we all gather in one place, ready for the enemy to come at any moment?”

“Hmm, I don't think so.”

“Right?”

Guy seemed convinced by my explanation.

As for me, I'm going to defend my country. Leon and Luminas, also Dagruel and Milim will not want to leave their countries either.

Milim's case is questionable, but there is no doubt about the others.

In that case, we should be ready to send reinforcements as soon as any part of the country is attacked.

“Yes, indeed. I have a duty to defend my country. In the worst case, we should consider abandoning our territory, but that should be a last resort.”

“Yes, I agree. And do not worry. If Luminas gives up her territory, I will take it without reservation.”

“Don't be ridiculous! I'm not going to give it to you, so don't get greedy.”

There was Dagruel, who wanted to seize the territory whenever he could, and Luminas, who wanted to prevent it.

That's why there were demon lords who could not leave their territories.

"What about Guy? Ramiris is in my country, so it doesn't matter, but you have no reason to defend this place, do you?"

"I don't. I'm worried about Leon, so I think I'll go visit him there."

Leon looked reluctant, but it was good.

Leon is the one I was worried about the most, and he also hadn't been completely cleared of suspicion yet. That's why I was going to keep an eye on him, so Guy's decision was reasonable.

If that was the case, then I guess I didn't need to monitor him anymore...

"Rimuru, you can afford it. Send some of your subordinates to Luminas, Dagruel, Milim, and Leon."

What?

Huh?

Guy's sudden request left me in a state of deep confusion.



As it turned out, I couldn't refuse.

I resisted for a long time, but Guy refused to listen to me.

What's more, he wanted me to set up a "magic transfer circle" so that he could go to and from each territory immediately.

It made me want to shout, "I'm not your subordinate!"

There was one reason why I didn't.

The long and the short of it was that I just gave in to Guy.

Because Guy, with his serious atmosphere, was so intimidating that it was kind of difficult to go against. I could probably do it if I pushed myself, but I would feel more comfortable by just giving in.

Unless it was absolutely necessary, it was an unavoidable measure to follow.

But then, who would be the right people to send, and to where?

Someone who was good at teleportation and 'Telepathy Net' from any location, was strong enough to endure on their own even if something happened, and was strong enough to resist domination. In that case, the three demon girls would be perfect for the job.

However, Testarossa has been entrusted with the task of coordinating the affairs around the empire, so I don't think I can appoint her this time. Carrera and Ultima would be the main candidates.

After that, there would be some of the executives.

"First, Geld for Milim. We need to get construction going again, and they know each other, so it will be accepted."

“Hm! He is well-liked by everyone. Oh, by the way, Midley wanted to meet with Gabil as well. He said he’d like to train with him again.”

I see, that’s a good idea.

I had left Gabil’s training to Ultima, but it had only been a few days and he was already looking at me as if about to cry. I might be able to send him over for a break.

In that case, Ultima would be a part of the package, and since we’re still in wartime, there was no need for the police<sup>18</sup>. I could call them back immediately if necessary, so I think it would be okay to make the decision.

“Okay. Then I’ll send Geld, Gabil, and Ultima to Milim’s territory.”

“Sure, I’m looking forward to it!”

With this, Milim’s country was all set.

Next is Luminas and the Holy Empire of Lubelius...

“For Luminas...do you have any requests on who to send?”

I’m getting smarter. She would be furious if I said that I would send Veldora, so I figured I’d better ask her before I stepped on a landmine.

“Hmm, you’re right...”

Luminas thought about it.

I was right to ask the question.

After a pause, Luminas opened her mouth.

“I like Shion, who you brought with you today. She has visited my country before, so I know her well.”

Luminas had been raving about Shion’s violin. It was no surprise that she remembered.

“Then I’ll send Shion. I’ll also send Adalmann and his retinue with you.”

Adalmann was also acquainted with Luminas.

There seemed to have been a falling out with the Seven Heavenly Saints, but that was in the past now, so they should be fine.

“Hmm. Since he’s caused me so much trouble, it might be fun to give him some guidance myself. I’ll accept, thank you.”

“Roger that!”

With this, Luminas’ country was also all set.

“So, who will you send to my country? Well, I don’t know anyone, so it can be anyone.”

Hmm, that’s right.

Well, if anyone is okay...

“I’ll send Carrera.”

“Carrera?”

“Yeah. Speaking of the Yellow Primordial—”

“Nn? The Yellow Primordial?!?”

Dagruel shouted with a very disgusted look on his face.

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<sup>18</sup>Ultima is like a police officer for Tempest

“No way, you, don’t tell me you’ve managed to tame that one?!”

“Not really taming, or rather, it just kind of happened...”

“Dagruel, just accept it. I understand where you’re coming from, but this is not the time to talk about it.”

“By the way, Ultima is the Violet Primordial. I was also astounded, so I understand how you feel.”

I had heard that Ultima’s territory overlapped with Luminas’s and Dagruel’s, so they must have known about each other for a long time. Hearing Luminas’ comment, Dagruel was shocked and shouted in surprise.

“I’m stunned, too.”

“Besides, it’s not just Yellow Primordial and Violet Primordial. You should know by now that it’s a little too late to be discussing Rimuru’s lack of common sense.”

They really just said whatever they wanted.

Milim is nodding her head in agreement, but the truth is that she’s probably on my side.

Well, whatever.

“So then, Carrera will go to Dagruel, okay?”

“Wait, hold on a minute!!”

Dagruel stood up from his seat, shouting loudly.

It looked like he was dancing with his arms outstretched, but perhaps this was his refusal stance?

“Objection! I think I also have the right to refuse!!”

The expression on his face was very desperate, showing his determination not to step back.

In contrast, Leon was smiling very calmly. It was as if he was saying, “I’m glad Carrera didn’t go to me.”

“Listen, Rimuru. If you send that ruffian to me, my Damargania will be destroyed. I don’t need much, but can you at least choose someone with a gentler personality?”

‘Character is more important than strength,’ Dagruel complained.

Even if you say that, so many of my subordinates are troublemakers...

I asked him about the situation in detail.

It seems that Dagruel’s country is a decaying sanctuary called the “Holy Void” Damargania. It is a country with few resources, and many of its buildings have been swallowed by the sand and are in ruins.

And Dagruel’s image of Carrera was the worst of all—a vandal who enjoys shooting out nuclear magic as a hobby.

Dagruel’s perception of Carrera is that she is worse than Milim’s second epithet, the Destroyer.

“She’s not that bad—”

“She is!”

“I agree with Dagruel’s words. I’ve been on the receiving end of her on a daily basis, so I can only imagine how you must feel.”

Dagruel asserted forcefully, even as I tried to deny it. In addition, even the taciturn Leon spoke eloquently of Carrera's many wrongdoings.

I have no choice but to believe what they say.

If so...

"In that case, I think Carrera should go to Leon."

They seem to know each other, and Guy will also be at Leon's place.

I thought it was a good idea because Carrera would not be able to do anything too crazy.

But then...

"Stop messing around! Were you even listening to me?! I absolutely refuse! That demon is the only one I'll never let set foot in my country!"

Dagruel smiled, but Leon refused. The tone of his voice changed from "I" to "me<sup>19</sup>" in a fit of rage, and he seemed to be completely out of control.

It was funny, so I was determined to send Carrera to him.

However, it was Guy who put a stop to that.

"Rimuru, you can't send Carrera."

"Why not?"

"She tries to fight me all the time, and when she thinks she's going to lose, she just throws the match and runs away, you know? This battle is not a game. I don't want to waste my energy. You understand?"

It was a good point.

And Guy's eyes were serious, as evidenced by the unprecedeted intensity in his voice.

"If Carrera is absolutely obedient to your orders and you'll take responsibility for anything that happens, I'll consider it. But that's impossible, right?"

Hmm, well, I'm not so sure about that. I'd be able to stop her if I was around, but I don't know what Carrera would do if I took my eyes off her.

"That's right. Carrera-chan is the one who's trying to make the game of "how many levels can you break through?" popular in my labyrinth. It's really annoying so I want you to stop it!"

Such violence...

As expected, it seems that some damage has been done without my knowledge.

"I'm going to ask Diablo for his oversight on this matter."

And so, I'll think about it while lightly trying to evade responsibility.

"Wahahaha! I liked Carrera and the others. I'd like to see her, so she can come to my country as my guest."

Oh, what a nice offer from Milim!

"Are you sure it's okay, Milim?"

"Of course."

Well then, problem solved.

<sup>19</sup>Leon changed from using "watashi" to "ore." Basically, he went from being more eloquent/polite, to more assertive/bold by changing how he referred to himself and his manner of speech. It's funny because it makes it sound like he snapped.

I'll send Carrera to Milim's country, and Ultima to Dagruel's country.

Frey-san may be angry with Milim later, but that's none of my business. Let's just get this over with before Milim changes her mind.

"Well then, I'll send Ultima and Carrera from Milim's place to Dagruel's country in turns. It's a familiar homeland, so I'm sure Ultima won't have a problem with that."

"I hate that—"

"—Okay then, it's decided. Dagruel, since that's the case, make sure to get along with Ultima!"

Guy also gave the 'OK.'

Dagruel was about to say something, but we agreed that it was just our imagination, and the matter was settled.

With that, it was decided who to send to Luminas, Milim, and Dagruel. The only question left was who to send to El Dorado, Leon's golden territory...

"If Guy's going there, why should I send one of my men? Guy can keep an eye on Leon, and I don't see the need to reduce my country's strength."

That was what I wanted to say.

Why should I reduce my country's strength when a war is about to start?

Well, the three demon girls can be teleported right back to me if something happens, or at the worst, I can summon them myself.

As for Geld, there was the reason why the construction could not be interrupted indefinitely, and Gabil was also Geld's bodyguard. In terms of simple combat ability, Geld is the stronger of the two. However, since Geld's main role is defense, it is advantageous to have an attacker.

In this respect, Gabil is excellent in both offense and defense, so I thought it would be interesting to pair him up with Geld.

As for Adalmann and his followers, I wanted them to concentrate on defending the labyrinth. However...

I was worried about sending Shion alone to Luminas.

Her strength alone was fine, but her behavior was not.

Adalmann knows all sorts of magic and can use teleportation as a matter of course. Adalmann had met Luminas and was expected to be polite to her, so I think this appointment was appropriate.

That's what was confirmed so far.

There was no one left to send to Leon's country.

"Hey, hey, don't be shy. Your country is full of awakened beings."

"There are. But I need them to protect my country."

"You're worrying too much. You've got Veldora, so don't be stingy. Hey, how about that Benimaru guy? He's good, right?"

"Of course not! Benimaru is a newlywed. Moreover, he's got two wives! Both of them are pregnant, so he can't be expected to take an extended business trip during such a critical time!"

'Benimaru is a monster, so it's okay—' I couldn't even laugh at that joke. Unless, of course,

he wanted to go.

In the days when lifetime employment was the norm, people would go on long business trips at the worst possible times in order to measure their loyalty to the company.

For example, just after marriage or just after building a house.

Most of the orders I had heard about were practically harassment, unless they had a meaning. In this day and age, companies that did such stupid things would probably end up going out of business.

“Anyway, Benimaru is no good.”

“Tsk, that doesn’t make any sense, but whatever. Then—”

“Oh, Diablo can go!”

I forgot about it since he’s always stuck so close to me, but since I’m sending Shion, I should also send Diablo.

If I sent away only one of them, they’d get in a fight.

My real secretary was Shuna, so I wouldn’t feel inconvenienced by their absence, so I think that’s the best choice.

“Diablo?”

“Yeah. He’s strong, so just him is enough.”

“Hold on a minute, Rimuru-kun.”

Guy started speaking to me with a purr<sup>20</sup>, but I figured it was just a bunch of nonsense. That’s why I ignored him and began wrapping up the conversation.

“We’re in a tough spot right now, too. I don’t have any extra resources to play with. Even so, I’m sending you our ace, so I hope that you’ll accept it in good faith.”

For someone like Guy, it’s better to just tell him the decision rather than to negotiate with him. I did so, remembering my past experience as a general contractor.

Specifically, I referred to the case where the general manager had successfully refused to negotiate with a JV (a construction joint venture) that was insisting on being sent more staff. While appealing that he could not afford to do so, he refused to increase the number of employees because he had already selected excellent personnel.

From the other party’s point of view, there were many situations where they had wanted to say, ‘We need more staff because your staff is incompetent!’

It was a common understanding between everyone, including myself, that there was not a fragment of sincerity in that place.

Well, it really depended on your luck whether you were really good or not.

It would have been interesting if there had been a system of appointing employees from amongst the government or subcontractors (a reverse nomination system), so that they could be evaluated. Well, it’s useless to think about it now, and the most important thing was to push Diablo to Guy.

“Bastard...”

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<sup>20</sup>Translation is “with a cat/cat-stroking voice.”

“Something wrong?”

“...”

“...”

I waited for his reply with an air of dignity, but inwardly my heart was pounding.

“Che, you’re getting thicker by the minute. Well, whatever. I’ll just put up with Diablo this time.”

Phew—I won!

“I don’t care who it is. Normally I would want to take Chloe, but that’s just the way things are. Oh yeah, if Rimuru wants, he can come to my country with Diablo. I promised to invite you before, but I haven’t been able to do so yet.”

Before I could bask in the afterglow of my victory, Leon made a suggestion.

Even if taking Chloe is out of the question, I might consider paying a visit.

“Okay. I’ll leave Chloe, but I’ll visit you later if the schedule permits. I’ll contact you through Diablo if that’s the case, so thank you.”

To begin with, Chloe was in absolute bed rest so I couldn’t move her. I didn’t know how Leon would react if I told him that, so I thought it best to keep quiet about it.

So, I decided to just accept the invitation.

It may not be the best time to do so considering the current situation, but it’s boring to just wait for Michael to make his move. As soon as I’m ready, I’ll gradually return to my daily life.

“Very well. I’ll look forward to hearing from you.”

“Yeah. Well, if Diablo gives you any trouble, just let me know. I’ll be there to educate him without a thought.”

“Very well. I won’t hesitate to call, so make sure he’s taken care of.”

Even though he hadn’t done anything yet, I was reminded by Guy, and not Leon. I was curious about their relationship, but it seemed troublesome, so I decided it would be better not to know.

With that in mind, our future plans were decided.



“Well, then I’ll head over to Leon’s place, so each of you just do what you have to do.”

Guy declared as such as he returned to the hall.

“Hey, hey, so no explanation for us, huh?”

“I received an explanation from Mizeri, but I’d at least like to know what the plan is.”

Karion and Frey-san were the ones who spoke up to Guy.

I thought that was a fair point.

Guy is too hasty in his conclusions. He thinks he’s the only one who needs to be convinced,

so he leaves the others behind.

However, there was no way that Guy would explain the situation properly.

And not only Guy, but also the childish Milim and Ramiris, the sloppy Dagruel and Leon, and the uncaring Luminas, were all similar and were unlikely to volunteer for such trouble.

I decided to be the adult and explain it to everyone.

“This is what we just discussed, but you were already briefed on the enemy, right?”

“Yeah, I heard that Velzard turned against us.”

“Apparently so. And the reason wasn’t betrayal or anything like that...”

And so, this time I summarized the story and explained the situation.

Even so, it was a good thing that only the seven of us attended the meeting. If the subordinates had also joined in, it would have been much more difficult to move the discussion forward.

Guy’s decision to anticipate this was correct, and I realized that it was his long years of experience that made a difference.

Thinking about it, it must have also been hard for Guy.

As one can see from the other demon lords, they each have their own peculiarities. It must have taken a lot of mental strength and difficulty to bring them together.

While re-evaluating Guy in this way, I finished my explanation.

“I knew it wasn’t like you to flounder around like this, but it turned out to be more troublesome than I expected.”

Frey-san was dumbfounded.

It’s not that she couldn’t handle it exactly, it’s just that she didn’t want to hear it.

“That’s true. Now that I’ve got the power, I’d like to see how far I can go against a True Dragon, but I doubt I’d have a chance against Velzard-dono.”

Karion made a fearless remark, but his forehead was sweating profusely. He was probably trying to figure out what was going on and what he could even do to overcome it.

“Kuahahaha! You said it, Karion. Even I’ve never been able to defeat my sister. If you want to try, let me be your opponent first!”

“Master. I don’t think this is the time. If you don’t take things seriously, Rimuru will get angry at you.”

Well, I probably should have been angry, but on the contrary, now I felt saved by Veldora’s light-hearted words. While we were talking so seriously, the situation had felt so bad that it made me depressed.

“I see. Then, in order to counter the domination, you’re going to concentrate your forces as much as possible. So, this Regalia Dominion can be resisted?”

“If your will is strong enough, it can be resisted. In Veldora’s case, he was targeted when his resistance was weakened by a surprise attack.”

“Hmm. The original me would have been able to withstand it, but I was in the middle of a battle with my sister at the time. It was a little tough.”

It was tough—or rather, you were dominated.

It's useless to try and pretend that it didn't happen, so I wish you'd just admit it honestly.

While I was dumbfounded at Veldora, Dagruel spoke to me.

"Rimuru, why don't you send Veldora to me instead? I'm not a big fan of Vio—Ultima, but Veldora is a familiar face, and I know him well."

He was suggesting that we change the dispatched subordinates, but unfortunately the answer was still no.

"Sorry, I can't do that. Veldora isn't my subordinate, he's my friend. I can't just decide for him."

If he's okay with it, then it's none of my business. But in this situation, I can't just ignore Veldora's wishes and go ahead with the discussion.

That's why I checked with him for the time being.

"Veldora, you were invited, so what will you do?"

Veldora laughed but refused.

"Kukuku. Dagruel, as much as I'd like to go and rescue you, I'm busy as well. I have a job to do, which is guarding the labyrinth of Ramiris!"

You just want to slack off...I knew it as soon as I saw Veldora declaring that he would act as usual.

"Master!!"

It was too bad for Ramiris, who was crying out with watery eyes, but I'm absolutely sure that Veldora was just trying to take it easy.

"I see, well, that's a shame. Even for me, there'd be a lot of trouble if I was attacked by Velzard. It would have been reassuring if you could have helped me."

"Kuhaha, Kuahahaha, Kuaaaahahahah! Well, you know. A man as strong as me has nothing to fear from my sister. Too bad! It's a shame indeed, Dagruel."

He's so obviously vain, this one.

But well, Velzard seems to be really dangerous, and I'm glad Veldora said no.

I feel bad for Dagruel, but my priority is the security of my country.

"Dagruel is right. I've never fought Velzard, but my gut tells me she's a dangerous opponent. If she comes here, I'll have to deal with her. You should be prepared to call for backup immediately, because you won't be able to do anything else."

Milim, who had been listening to our conversation, made a very good point.

It was a realistic suggestion, unlike the normally overconfident Milim.

To put it another way, Velzard was trouble, and since it was unlikely that she would attack alone, we agreed that we should also avoid acting alone.

Frey-san and the others seemed to agree.

"I see. Well then, let's make sure that we don't act on our own either."

"Yes, do that! Then Rimuru, I want you to bring Geld and the others to me as soon as possible. If you want, I can pick them up myself?"

"No, it's fine. I'll explain the situation when I get back and have them ready for you right away."

Geld can be reached by Teleport, so there was no need to rush. I was going to explain the situation to the executives first, and it shouldn't be too late to send them out after we had come to a common understanding.

"Then I'll leave it to you, Rimuru."

"Right. If the enemy attacks, I'll contact you immediately."

That's right.

I didn't explain that Carrera was being sent, but Frey-san doesn't seem to know what primordials were. I didn't think there was any need to tell her, so I ended the conversation peacefully.

Besides, when it comes to stalling Velzard, there was no reason to complain about throwing in a Carrera.

"But what I am curious about is Michael and the others' purpose. I don't think it's just to take over this world..."

It was Louis who asked that.

"Oh, that. It's the resurrection of Veldanava. Michael and Feldway are working for the Lord's resurrection."

" " "Haah?!" " "

When I explained this, those who hadn't yet heard about it screamed in astonishment. The information was known to my companions, but it seemed that it was quite a shock to the others.

"Well, Rimuru is right. That's what Obera, my collaborator, told me!"

When Milim affirmed as such, Karion muttered in frustration.

"Seriously...I didn't just hear that."

"Eh, didn't you know about it? I thought I already told you."

"No, you didn't. Well, Midley's just as guilty as me on this one. You'll have to tell me more later."

As soon as I was reconsidering Milim, this is what happened.

I heard that Milim and Midley had met with Obera, but it seems that their conversation was not well communicated. That's why we have to make it a habit to report, communicate and consult on a regular basis.

—Is what I thought. I'm not in a position to speak so highly when I had also forgotten to tell them.

Louis spoke with a thoughtful expression while Milim and the others were talking.

"A True Dragon is immortal. There is no need to worry about it because he will eventually come back."

"Well, yes. It's normal to think so, but Michael is an ego that arose from a Skill. Because he's an impossible existence, he must be thinking in ways that ordinary people can't comprehend."

Luminas shakes her head, as if she doesn't understand.

Guy, however, seems to think a little differently.

"That said, it's true that Veldanava has shown no signs of resurrection. I can see why Feldway might think it's okay for the world to die."

Guy boasted that he believed Veldanava to be immortal because he had fought him once before. On top of that, he said that he could understand why people adored Veldanava.

“But, you know, once you die, some of your memories and personality will be affected, right? That seems like a different person to me.”

“As for that, it’s a matter of personal feelings<sup>21</sup>. I feel like they are the same person. After all, they would possess the same soul.”

“Hmm, I don’t know. Velgrynd-san also said ‘I don’t care if Rudra is reincarnated as a bad guy or a good guy,’ but I thought that was something I should care about.”

“Ahahaha! You’re still caught up in the stereotypes you had when you were a human. Well, you’ll understand eventually.”

“It’s not like that...”

It doesn’t make sense to me, but from the perspective of a long-lived species, the idea of right and wrong may be just a mood of the moment. If that’s the case, I will keep my thoughts in mind and cherish them.

No, no, but then what would happen if I got involved in something evil? It would be exactly what the late Mariabell had feared.

In the first place, I am a selfish person.

That’s why I have to make sure that I don’t act on my own and bring chaos to the world.

I still like to do whatever I want, but I’m only working for a better world.

I swore to myself that I would never do anything to make others unhappy just for my own amusement.



As I was asking myself if this was okay, Guy spoke to me as if he had just remembered something.

“By the way, Rimuru, I was just wondering...”

“Nn? I don’t think I have anything else to hide anymore though?”

“No, I doubt that, but that’s okay. I was just curious about Michael’s thoughts. How is he going to bring Veldanava back?”

Guy pressed me to tell him what I knew.

‘How the hell should I know?’—is what I was about to say when I remembered something.

“Oh, now that I think about it, he was saying something about that.”

“Yeah. He mentioned it.”

I muttered, and Veldora, who was listening along, nodded.

“Yes, I think—”

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<sup>21</sup>The word used was “Kansei (感性)” and other translations could be “sensitivity,” or “perception.”

“Kufufufu. They seem to believe that if they take in the power of the three “True Dragons,” Veldanava-sama will be revived with all of the Dragon Factors. I think it is foolish, but can we be absolutely sure that it wouldn’t work?”

Diablo explained it before I could remember.

That’s right, I remembered it was something like that. I had forgotten about it because it didn’t seem realistic at the time and I didn’t think such a method would be successful.

In the first place, the Dragon Factor was the key.

«If it’s about “Dragon Factor,” Master has also acquired it»

Oh, I’ve become a “True Dragon” of sorts, haven’t I? So then, it’s not surprising that I have the Dragon Factor.

Be that as it may...

Velzard, Velgrynd, and Veldora. Even if you collect the Dragon Factor from all three True Dragons, it’s meaningless if the most important factor, Veldanava’s, is missing.

If the soul is different, then it’s a different person.

According to Diablo, it’s not impossible, though.

“Ah? It’s absurd, that theory. Even if you could recreate him, it would only be a pseudo-body, and while they might be able to imitate his skills, they wouldn’t have anything to do with the soul, which is the most essential part.”

Guy interjected, seemingly to be of the same opinion as I was.

“I don’t know. It’s just that we can’t deny the possibility that the lost soul could come back if they have a perfected body.”

“Well, I guess. Veldanava is a complete spiritual life form, so I don’t think his soul was scattered like Rudra’s. You’re right, it is possible.”

Hmm, that theory still doesn’t make sense.

«There is no reason to come back. In the first place, Veldanava should be capable of regenerating his body himself if he intends to return.»

That’s right.

Since Ciel-san denied it, I was confidently skeptical of the enemy’s plan.

Well, it’ll probably fail anyway, so if we just ignore it—

“Hmm. Then the enemy’s goal may be Veldora.”

Everyone in the room stopped moving.

“Fuah?”

Veldora’s dumb mumbling echoed through the silent hall.

He seemed to have no idea what that meant but was leaving it to chance.

What’s more important now is what Luminas had pointed out.

“Oops, that’s a blind spot. Veldora was taken over once before, but they didn’t take away the Dragon Factor at the time.”

I guess it's not the success rate that matters to Michael, only the possibility of it.

In that case, regardless of whether Veldanava would be resurrected or not, there was a good chance that Veldora's Dragon Factor would be targeted.

Not good, I hadn't thought of the situation where Velzard would be taken over, so I feel like I'm way behind the times.

"Hmm," Milim murmured. "Obera also said that Emperor Rudra—in other words Michael, had taken over Velgrynd's Dragon Factor. Now that Velzard is under control, all that remains is Veldora!"

"Whoa, whoa, hold on a second. What do you mean?" Guy asked incredulously. "Are you saying that Velzard will also lose her Dragon Factor?!"

So I just said what I thought.

"Isn't that what makes sense?"

Then Guy showed an unusually agitated expression.

"In that case, Velzard won't be safe. She's good enough to fight me on equal terms, but she might just disappear?"

"Hmm, I wonder about that. In Velgrynd's case, one of her 'Parallel Existences' was absorbed. I think the amount of magicules was probably less than 10 percent, but that alone was just enough for Michael."

After hearing this explanation, Guy regained his composure.

"Hmm, I guess so. The power of a "True Dragon" is immense, so they can't be absorbed that easily."

I nodded.

At the time, Velgrynd had suffered considerable damage from Carrera's "Judgment," but she still had a considerable amount of power left.

In fact, Michael had taken in Velgrynd's power with Yuuki's Skill 'Still Life,'<sup>22</sup> but he could not absorb it completely.

In addition, I also had an idea of why Michael had banished Velgrynd from this world.

"Also, it's not just the strength and factors that are taken away, but also the skills. Doing so would remove the absolute control over the angelic Skill system, so if he doesn't act carefully, he'll get struck with a counterattack."

That's why Michael would want to use Velzard to weaken her, and then take the factor away and banish her.

«I agree.»

Well, sometimes I can be quite brilliant as well.

"But why would he need to take away their powers? If he has absolute control, wouldn't it

<sup>22</sup>奪命掌 can also mean "deadly palm" but the katakana (スティールライフ or sutīruraifu) reads as "Still-Life." Alternatively, "sutīruraifu" might also be "steal life," or "steel life." I wasn't exactly sure. This skill is also explained in V17 and allows one to harness the energy of a dead enemy to a certain extent.

be wiser to use them as a pawn rather than to use and banish them?”

Uh, that’s also true.

Michael’s skill can be used over the skills of a user. I don’t see any reason to take it away.

Ciel-san agreed with me, so I had thought my reasoning was perfect...

“Well then, do you think it’s necessary for Veldanava to revive by gathering all of the skills in Michael’s hands?”

Dagruel spoke up, leaving me to mourn.

“So, you don’t mind ignoring the demonic and other derived Skills?”

“That’s right. Maybe he thinks that the only pure Skills are the ones Veldanava used to possess.”

This time, it was Luminas.

Just listening to our conversation, seemed to have led to a very profound conclusion.

“A perfect Veldanava—In other words, gathering pure skills in order to recreate the omnipotent being that created all skills? It sounds far-fetched, but if that’s the case, I don’t think that wish is going to come true. With Leon over here, it’s impossible for them to gather all of the skills.”

Guy laughed invincibly, but I don’t think it’s that easy.

If that reasoning was correct, then we would have already defeated Michael’s strategic goal at this point.

Because, you know?

I, or rather Ciel-san, had already consumed the ‘Wisdom King Raphael,’ the ‘Covenant King Uriel,’ and even the ‘Charity King Raguel.’

Ciel-san spoke up to my worried self.

«Velgrynd, deprived of the Dragon Factor, could no longer maintain her existence and was certain to disappear even without “space-time transfer.” Before she disappeared, Master released the main body, so I assume that all of the energy was reintegrated.»

Hmmmm...

In that case, why did he go to the trouble of banishing her?

«Perhaps he was afraid it would resurrect her. Even if he took away the Dragon Factor, he couldn’t destroy the soul or the heart. There, I believe he was trying to prevent the resurrected Velgrynd from taking revenge on him.»

If you can’t come to a perfect conclusion, it means you can’t be sure.

That’s probably why Ciel-san has been avoiding this topic.

She’s still a perfectionist, but she’s been very helpful even as my advisor.

I wonder if Ciel-san is concerned about what would happen if Velgrynd was resurrected without losing her skills.

«That's right. The disappearance would be certain, but she would probably be released from control. If that happened—»

That could incur the wrath of Velgrynd, who would still have memories of the time when she was being controlled. If she discovered she was being dominated by the Skill, she may leave the ‘Charity King Raguel’ who caused it, gain her freedom, and reappear before Michael.

So, banishment was the way to go then, was it?

Since there would be no one left to use it, it makes sense to keep the useful Skills.

If that was the case, then the *theory of recapturing Skills* that is currently being discussed, is wrong.

«In the first place, I wonder if I can recreate a Skill I've created before as many times as I want.»

Yes, that's what I'm talking about!

That's what I wanted to say too.

I was relieved to see that Ciel-san's self-confidence was getting better than before.



Now that I had collected my thoughts, I decided to join the discussion once again.

“I think it’s beneficial to gather skills, but it has nothing to do with the revival of Veldanava, does it? I think what we should focus on is the Dragon Factor.”

“Are you trying to change the subject?”

Dagruel looks at me doubtfully.

He seemed to be fed up with inconclusive topics, and I understood that feeling well.

There was nothing more meaningless than a meeting with no conclusions.

That's why I was going to make a quick conclusion right here.

“No, it’s a matter of certainty. Michael didn’t say anything about the skills, so I think that was an afterthought.”

“Hmm, you may continue.”

Well, not that I even needed permission from Luminas.

I’m not sure why she was being so pompous, but I think it was better to end the discussion rather than to question it here.

This was not an escape. Absolutely not.

So I came to a conclusion.

“If the Skills really are important, then I know of someone besides Leon who has one. So I think we should ignore them and work to keep Veldora out of the hands of the enemy.”

“Hmm, you sound confident.”

“Well, yeah. I know I confused you a bit when I told you they took my skills, but please don’t worry about that.”

When I said that, Guy stared at me thoughtfully.

“Hmph! It’s annoying that I still don’t know why they took Velgrynd’s skill. Fine then. I’ll trust you.”

Guy was a lot more understanding than I thought.

For the time being, we’ve made our decision.

Some might say that we were only going back to the conclusion we had come to earlier, but we can’t let that bother us.

“So then, yeah. I guess we should be wary of letting Velzard and Veldora meet. I’m counting on you, Rimuru.”

That’s what Guy said.

It may look like he’s trying to push the responsibility on me, but it’ll take a long time to dig in, so I’ll just nod.

As is often the case when one is fed up with discussions, I was in a mood to just let things go.

So then—

“I knew it. I was in a very important position, wasn’t I?”

I couldn’t help but be annoyed at Veldora who said stupid things without even taking the discussion seriously.

Currently, we were behind.

We had to admit that, but we could make up for it.

Veldora had nothing to do with the Angelic system and had already escaped the control of the “Regalia Dominion.” The enemy was probably aware of this, so their next move would probably be a straightforward one.

If that happened, it would be an all-out war, so I think the first priority would be to bring the angelic owners together first.

If it were me, I would definitely act cautiously, but I didn’t know which strategy Michael would mainly adopt.

But there was no rush.

There was no doubt that the enemy’s main objective was Veldora, so we could take steps to prevent it.

In the worst case scenario, it might be a good idea to eliminate Leon’s “control circuit,” though I didn’t want to do it.

“Well, I wish you all the best. If anything happens, get in contact right away.”

With Guy’s words as the final conclusion, the Walpurgis, which had been a dull affair with not the slightest sense of cooperation, finally came to an end.

*That Time I Got Reincarnated as a Slime*

# The Heavenly Emperor and the Former Hero

Interlude

## Interlude

### The Heavenly Emperor and the Former Hero

“What’s wrong with you today, Leon-kun?”

The one who had asked was a beautiful woman, Elmesia El-Ru Sarion, the Heavenly Emperor of Sorcerer’s Dynasty Sarion. Of course, it was Demon Lord Leon Cromwell himself who was asked. After Walpurgis ended, Leon had not returned to his own country, but had taken a detour to Sarion.

“Guy is supposed to come to my country, so I don’t have much time to spare. Let me cut to the chase without any social niceties.”

“You’re so impatient. But if that’s the case, I suppose it can’t be helped.”

In the first place, the fact that Leon could meet Elmesia without an appointment meant that he was being treated very well. On top of that, he doesn’t care about what’s convenient to Elmesia, which was unbelievable for those who didn’t know about their relationship.

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The relationship between the two went back to the time when Leon was not yet a demon lord, or even a Chosen Hero. Leon had been wandering the world in search of Chloe, but he had once stopped in Sarion. There, he met Elmesia’s mother, Silvia El’Ru, who had time to spare. She was a true elf, a high elf, and was famous as a genius researcher who proposed the basic theory of magic science.

However, her other face was that of one of the high elves created by the “Divine Ancestor” Twilight Valentine, the king of the vampires<sup>23</sup>.

Silvia was strong. If she had cooperated, Silvia’s husband, Elmesia’s father, might not have died. But that was a story that did not come true. The reason was that Elmesia had been in Silvia’s belly at that very moment.

Silvia became Leon’s master and taught him all of the swordplay and magic she possessed. It

<sup>23</sup>This guy showed up in V17 as “the ancestor” who loved to experiment (you can read about him in Raine’s chapter). He basically got disintegrated by Luminas, his daughter.

was only natural that Leon grew stronger. As a result, Leon and Elmesia had become acquainted with each other. They were granted the privilege of visiting each other, a privilege reserved only for family and close friends.

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With Elmesia's approval, Leon opened his mouth.

"You've been gathering intelligence, haven't you?"

When pointed out, Elmesia admitted it honestly.

"Of course."

"Then you know that Demon Lord Rimuru defeated the Eastern Empire, right?"

"I was aware of the primordials' activities. I visited them briefly after the victory party."

"And what about the battle after that?"

"Yuuki-kun, right? I heard that you were fighting with an insider from the Empire, but the information was cut off at a crucial moment..."

'I see,' Leon nodded, disclosing the information while watching Elmesia's reaction.

"There was a lot going on at that time. Between Velgrynd's appearance, and Veldora being taken over, it seemed to be a critical situation. However, Rimuru defeated them all."

"What? Seriously?"

"It looks like you really didn't know. In that case, I'll make this short and sweet."

True to his word, Leon gave a brief explanation. He told her about what had been discussed at Walpurgis with little to no concealment. It was Leon's decision to ask for cooperation, knowing that Elmesia would not be able to communicate with the other party.

"I see... If that's how it was, then it makes sense that Rimu-chi<sup>24</sup> would have trouble explaining it."

And so Elmesia was convinced.

'I won,' he had said. But even so... It was unbelievable that that single statement also meant that he had beaten Velgrynd. She had thought that Rimuru was quite strong, but had never imagined that he would grow up to be such a monster.

*It seems that he's already become stronger than mother. No wonder he was able to tame the primordials.*

He had freed Velgrynd and Veldora who were under control and defied the odds. Even though Michael and the others had escaped, it was not an exaggeration to say that the situation was in fact a great victory.

"Just so I know, you aren't trying to trick me with a lie, are you, my dear?"

"I have no reason to lie to you. I heard the story from him in person, so I can't guarantee that it's true."

"Hmm, Leon-kun believes in Demon Lord Rimuru more than I expected."

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<sup>24</sup>Elmesia is giving Rimuru a nickname. Adding -chi to the end of a name kind of makes the nickname more cutesy/childish.

“How would you feel if you were told that Emperor Rudra had been taken over by his own Skill and was now calling himself Michael?”

“Well... If I was going to lie, I’d tell a way better lie than that...” he assured her. “So, it was so absurd, I ended up thinking it was all believable.”

“Oh my,” Elmesia couldn’t help but laugh, “isn’t this an uncharacteristic reaction from the normally skeptical Leon-kun?”

“Don’t be silly. Rimuru may be cunning, but he’s not the kind of man who would lie to make himself look good. Rather, he’d prefer the opposite—”

“Is he trying to sell himself short? If that’s what you’re trying to say, then I’ll agree with you.”

*How typical of that slime,* Elmesia thought. Even the matter of having several subservient primordials was no big deal. It must be the same for this case. Elmesia knew that Rimuru and the others had won, but other than that brief “We won,” nothing had been explained to her in detail.

Nonetheless, she knew that something completely outrageous must have happened because of that bullshit slime, so she was planning to go and ask him about it when things calmed down.

*As I thought, it’s going to be troublesome after all. I know it’s not something you can talk about on a cell phone, but I really should have asked for more details.*

Elmesia’s face remained unchanged as she regretted her mistake of being nothing but relieved to hear that he had won.

“Still, it was helpful that Veldora remained friendly and Velgrynd became an ally, wasn’t it?”

Leon nodded in agreement.

“As far as I can tell, it’s a wonder he’s still alive. At least for me, it would have been impossible to defeat Velgrynd.”

If he had been dealing with Guy, there was still a chance.

However, Leon had no chance of victory against the ‘Parallel Existence’ Skill that Rimuru had mentioned.

Because of that, Leon was convinced that there was no reason for him to lie about his chances against such an ability.

“Oh, well. Even I can’t do that, so why should Leon-kun be so self-deprecating?”

“I’m not being self-deprecating.”

“Really?”

“Yeah.”

More importantly, Leon wanted to get back to the topic at hand. Whenever Elmesia was around, she would tease him at every opportunity. In order to avoid that this time, he decided to quickly tell her what he wanted.

“The situation is as I explained. With that in mind, I’d like you to get in touch with Master.”

“Mother, hey...”

She understood what Leon was saying. As long as he possessed the Ultimate Skill ‘Purity

King Metatron,' he wouldn't be able to escape Michael's control. They had to do something about it before the enemy found out that he possessed the power. For that purpose, Elmesia's knowledge alone was not enough. Considering the gravity of the situation, he had decided that the highest wisdom of Sarion needed to be mobilized.

However! Silvia was a free spirit. She was also Sarion's greatest force<sup>25</sup>. She was also very good at covert action, making it difficult to locate Silvia if she was hiding. Even if the thirteen seated Magus leaders were dispatched, it was only a gamble that they would be able to find her.

"Since Magic Communication has been canceled, there's no way for me to contact her. She does regularly show her face though, so that we can talk about various things...However, it is difficult to keep in touch with her."

Incidentally, "regularly" actually meant about once a year. For certain reasons, Elmesia had never really thought it to be inconvenient.

In the first place, it was not often that they had to rely on Silvia to solve a problem.

"There was also that secret method to use when they were in a real pinch, but..."

"So, it's no good?"

Elmesia let out a sigh as Leon asked her straight out. As Silvia's apprentice, Leon was like a little brother to Elmesia. She was hesitant to turn down his request.

"I'll do my best, but in the worst case, you'll have to wait about six months."

"...All right. That's fine."

As soon as he said so, Leon stood up.

"You're going back?"

"I'm finished here."

Elmesia smiled, wishing that he could just take it easy sometimes. *Such a clumsy way of life*, she thought, that's just how Leon was.



After Leon left, Elmesia set out to keep her promise to him. She called the royal guards and ordered an emergency call for Silvia. In fact, Elmesia and Silvia were identical in appearance. Therefore, they had a secret where they could secure free time by taking turns playing the role of the emperor.

"Ahh, she's going to hate me for sure..."

If it were herself, she would have been furious that someone had taken away her free time. That's why she felt that her mother's anger was understandable. She was willing to put up with the complaining this time around, but she still didn't think that the choice was wrong. After

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<sup>25</sup>Military force/war potential.

all, this was an unprecedented situation. From what she had heard, even Demon Lord Guy had agreed to escort Leon. Guy moving from the permafrost was a big deal in itself.

*Seriously, it's the first time in my life that I've been in such a serious situation.*

Elmesia thought about the future and was buried in melancholy.

*That Time I Got Reincarnated as a Slime*

**Chapter  
2**

**A Short-lived  
Everyday Life**

## Chapter 2

### A Short-lived Everyday Life

Five months have passed since Walpurgis.

During this time, many things have happened, but it has been very peaceful overall.

There have been no signs of Michael making his move.

I was worried that we hadn't been able to keep track of what Feldway and the others were up to, but I was trying to think positively that we've at least had the time to strengthen our defenses.

Or rather, there was a reason to be taking it easy.

Actually, I had been trying to get in touch with Dino since back then.

The method of contacting him was, quite simply, the curse that Zegion had carved into Dino.

Zegion and Dino were connected through the curse spell. When Ciel-san told me this, I had asked if we could communicate through it.

«It's easy.»

I couldn't help the blank look on my face when I was told that so simply, but I suppose I should have welcomed it if I could.

I immediately contacted Dino and stuck it right to him.

Well, as far as Dino was concerned, I'd rather have him near the enemy. Even though he had been doing some chores for Ramiris, I couldn't shake the thought that he would just be a waste of money even if he was on our side. It would be more helpful if he could give us information while in the enemy camp.

As I have said before, 'what one should really fear is not a competent enemy, but an incompetent ally.' This is exactly the case with Dino, who has contributed to us simply by being on the enemy side.

So, the contents of the conversation we had at that time—

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“Hey! Dino-kun, how are you?”

When I spoke to him, Dino seemed to panic.

That's right.

It was natural for him to be so surprised because I had suddenly spoken into his mind.

"Rimuru-san?"

"Oh, so you do know. Me, it's me."

This was not just a scam.

To make him understand that I was in the superior position, I'd have to be high-handed here.

"...What is this for? I am very busy—"

He reacted quite uncomfortably, and I smirked.

You won't be getting away, Dino-kun.

With that in mind, I send out a 'thought.'

"No, it's quite a simple story. Dino-kun, I heard you picked a fight with me, right?"

"N-No, I mean, I did pick a fight, but it wasn't as dramatic as it sounds..."

"I don't want to hear any excuses. I think what's most important is sincerity."

"Sincerity, you say..."

"I heard that you led intruders into Ramiris' labyrinth and went on a rampage. Moreover, you even plotted to kidnap Ramiris, didn't you?"

I smirked and cornered Dino.

"Well, you see, I had to do it because I was ordered—"

"Didn't I just tell you that I don't want to hear any excuses?"

"Yes, I'm sorry..."

It was hard to tell which of us was the villain here, but I'm a demon lord, so it's fine.

Incidentally, Dino was also a demon lord, so my conscience remained conveniently unharmed.

Dino's reaction was sluggish, as if realizing that he was in the wrong.

Taking advantage of the opportunity, I began to negotiate.

"Normally, this would have been an unforgivable act, but I am willing to ignore it just this once. That is, if Dino-kun is sorry though."

"Seriously?! Of course, I'm sorry. It's just that I have my own problems, and this is what happened. You understand that, don't you?"

"Mm-hmm, I do. It's just that Dino-kun was under Michael's control."

"Eh?"

As I thought, he wasn't aware of it.

However, Dino's inherently lazy personality probably helped him this time, as he didn't seem to have much loyalty to Michael, the ruler.

"Wai—hold on! Seriously?! I'm being controlled?"

"Yup, you are. I didn't think it was your decision to do that, either."

After saying that, I told him about Michael's ability.

"So that's how it is. I'm assuming that you have an angelic Skill too, am I wrong?"

"No way... It's true that I do have the Ultimate Skill 'Heavenly King Astarte'..."

Dino's skill is 'Heavenly King Astarte.' I'm not sure what it does, but it seems that it is an angelic Skill.

"That's it, then. That's why you're being manipulated by Michael without even realizing it."

Based on Dino's reaction, letting him know that he was under control could be a good thing or a bad thing. He did not seem to be completely under control to the point of swearing allegiance, so it might be easier for the domination to fall apart.

Dino's character might also be a factor, but I had a feeling that he would be able to break through this well.

"What should I do? Listening to you, I don't feel angry at Michael. I don't feel like betraying him, and I don't feel like joining you guys. I didn't realize it until now, but it's definitely a weird feeling."

With this, I was able to find out Dino's skills and also make him aware of everything. This contact seems to have been a great success.

But anyway, I'll take my chances.

"Well, I have a hypothesis. If you have a demonic skill that opposes an angelic Skill, you might be able to offset them and escape from their control. There are other ways to do this, but I don't recommend them because they depend on luck."

As for the offset theory, Chloe is an example.

Because she had the Manas named Chronoa, Chloe herself was not controlled. I heard that she had lost contact with Chronoa now, but from what I saw, she had fought and struggled to remove the "control circuit" from 'Hope King Sariel.'

I wanted to help, but I trust them and will let them do what they want.

So, it's just a matter of luck.

That's a lie.

It's not that I don't trust Dino, but he is still under control. I'm not stupid enough to reveal all of my tricks.

Actually, with Leon, I had a feeling that Ciel-san would take care of things if used 'Predation' on him. But just the thought of that was unpleasant, so I was saving it as a last resort.

That's why I told Dino that there was only a possibility that I could do something.

"...I see. It doesn't feel good being controlled, so I'll see if I can't do something about it."

"Hey, hey, don't overdo it. Michael and us demon lords are going to have an all-out war, so I want you to do nothing and stay out of suspicion."

Even if I could get information from Dino such as by asking him to spy, I wouldn't fully believe him.

The effect of Zegion's curse was not enough to prevent him from telling lies, and even if he could, it would be useless if he told Michael about what was reported to us.

Since I was not sure which effect was greater, Zegion's coercion or Michael's control, I thought it was dangerous to rely on uncertain information.

But even so!

It would be a waste to let Dino fool around here!

Rather, it is unacceptable that we'd be the only ones who were struggling.

"Is that all right?"

Dino looks happy to be told not to do anything.

He's such a sweet guy.

There's no reason for me to be kind.

"I also thought it would be hard for you to betray Michael."

I replied in a gentle tone as if I cared about Dino, but I was secretly ready to make him work.

"No, I don't want to betray him, but I don't care at all about leaking information!"

Hey, is this really okay?

I don't think I can trust this guy on a fundamental level...

No, this is fine.

It's best to have him act in our favor to the extent that he doesn't even feel like he's betraying us.

"No, it's okay. You don't have to do anything."

"Seriously? Then, what about that sincerity thing you were talking about earlier?"

I've been doing a good job of leading the conversation.

It seems I was right to use Dino's innocent nature to get him to act voluntarily.

"Even if you don't join the battle, that's almost like having Michael's strength reduced."

"I see, that is true!"

It's a little annoying that he was convinced by that, but because it's Dino, I feel like it's forgivable.

"I see, if you say so. Then I'll let you know if there's anything you need to hear about."

"That would help."

All right, now he'll be able to be a spy without being aware of it.

"Okay, I'll keep an eye on things, so let me know if you need anything. Is that okay?"

"Yeah, that's fine. By the way, what's Michael doing now? Do you have any idea of when he might be ready to move?"

Having succeeded in getting Dino to talk, I asked him what I wanted to know.

I could tell when he was lying, so as long as Dino didn't tell on me, the information would be reliable.

"Yeah, I think he's asleep now. You see, he got Velgrynd's power and also took Velzard's power. I guess the strain of that took its toll and he went dormant."

Whoa, that's some great information right there.

I had thought he would weaken Velzard before making his move, that impatient bastard.

Oh, I heard she fought Guy, so she might have been a little weakened. But it seemed that neither of them had fought seriously, so it must have been too much for Michael to handle.

And so, the Dragon Factor was taken from her.

If that's the case, it's possible that Michael has changed in some way, so we should be on

our guard.

What I am wondering about is—

“What happened to Velzard?”

“Velzard is recovering, too. She will probably be back to normal in a few days.”

I see...

I guess the possibility of being attacked out of nowhere has disappeared, but a True Dragon’s resilience is unbelievable.

However, I’d like to think that there won’t be a full-scale invasion until Michael, the commander, is back to normal.

“Okay, thanks.”

“For this, it’s a small price to pay.”

There were many more questions I wanted to ask, such as the number of enemies, but I decided not to go any further.

It would be better to be satisfied with Dino’s willingness to speak up, because he would be a long-lasting source of information.

“Okay then, I’ll be in touch.”

“Oh...I just remembered. It would be helpful if you could tell Ramiris that I’m sorry.”

Just as I was about to end the conversation, Dino asked me for a favor.

So, I briskly declined.

“Ah? You can apologize later yourself. She was pretty angry and said that she was going to use all forty-eight of her special moves on you.”

“Forty-eight my ass! All she can do is dropkicks!”

“I don’t know. That’s just what she said. Didn’t I tell you?”

When I said that, it seemed like Dino was laughing.

“Fufu. I understand. See you later.”

“Yeah, see ya.”

With Dino’s approval, I broke the connection this time.

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And that was about it for the exchange.

It went well, I’d say.

I had already shared this story with the demon lords, with the caveat that Dino was an informant. That’s why we did not have to feel tense.

Of course, I couldn’t deny the possibility that the whole thing was a trap, but if I did that, I’d be just like Ciel-san. It was no fun being overly cautious and losing your nerve, plus that would be like falling into the enemy’s trap, so I came to the conclusion that the best thing to do was to be natural.

Well, that was still the same decision I made when I heard that the angels were coming to attack.

I had always been the type of person who did what I could do tomorrow.

For example, whenever I had summer vacation homework, I would do my best in the beginning and finish the rest on the last day.

And if I didn't get it done in time?

At that time, I would go straight to school without hesitation and announce 'I forgot,' at which point they would get mad at me.

If I was told to bring it in tomorrow, then I would finish what I could, and if I couldn't, next I would say 'I lost it.'

Well, I had done my best because I had wanted to finish it as much as possible, but I think it is important to accept that which is impossible.

Eh, do my best on a regular basis?

No way, it's about focusing the mind.

So then, as long as you are prepared to get someone angry, the rest is manageable.

In other words, you have to take responsibility for your own actions.

But I've digressed from the topic at hand.

I asked Dino to call me every morning to see if Michael had woken up or not.

Michael shouldn't be able to see everything. He seems to be able to manipulate the skills of his subjects, but I don't think he can read their thoughts. If that were possible, he would have to process a huge amount of information, and that would make it more difficult to extract only the necessary information.

I do not believe that a person who cannot even tell a lie to himself would go that far.

The rationale behind that thought was Ciel-san.

Even Ciel-san asserted that although it was possible to speak with someone connected by the 'Soul Corridor,' it was impossible to read their every thought. While one might sometimes be able to sense their surface psychology, it is impossible to interfere with what someone is thinking deep inside.

However, I have heard that you can see the answer to a question if you ask it directly, but I have some idea about that. I always tried to be cautious, because I felt that my thoughts were often seen through.

For that reason, I placed a certain level of trust in Dino's information.



And so, during the last five months when Michael had not moved, we had been preparing for the final battle.

We had established a system of mutual cooperation amongst us demon lords, and were holding detailed discussions with each of our territories so that we'd be able to deal with any

problems as soon as they arose.

And by us, I meant me.

The agreement to go and help the others if possible was meaningful to me, but it had been very difficult to coordinate.

Just by looking at that exhausting banquet, one would understand how difficult it was to meet with demon lords who were so selfish.

First, as promised, I was constructing a “magic transfer circle” in each demon lord’s territory.

After Walpurgis, I had asked Mizeri to take me to each of the demon lords’ countries. I recorded those locations so that I could teleport to them immediately.

Of course, the demon lords had all agreed to this.

I already knew Guy’s castle, the ‘Frost Palace,’ since it had been the meeting place at the time.

I had also already been to Luminas’ Holy Empire of Lubelius, and its capital, the Sacred City of ‘Runes.’

I had visited the still-unnamed country of Milim many times, so I really only had to visit two places, El Dorado (the Golden Land) and Damargania (the Holy Void).

Dagruel’s territory was like a decaying sanctuary. If I had more time, I would have liked to take a leisurely tour, but work took priority at the time. I left immediately and made arrangements to dispatch Ultima and the others.

Incidentally, I found out from the conversation that Milim and Dagruel could not teleport.

Needless to say, neither could Ramiris.

“No, I’m not good at that kind of thing.”

“Me too! It’s faster to just fly than to do those troublesome coordinate calculations!”

That’s what they both said.

It is true that transportation type magic can only transfer you to a location that has been recorded. In the case of the Skill ‘Spatial Transportation,’ it is more flexible, but the coordinates of your current location and your destination—an accurate depiction (image)—are required or else the skill won’t be activated. It is necessary to understand the correlation between the positional information and to calculate the angle and distance to jump.

It may look like an easy transition, but there is a time lag, and it is a surprisingly complicated skill.

Milim acts by instinct and natural intuition, and is not good at intentional calculation. Her computational ability is very high, but it seems that she is not good at it because she finds it troublesome.

Dagruel is the physical type as one can see...

And Ramiris, well, you know.

The construction of the “magic transfer circles” had been a request from Guy, but they might also come in handy in the future. Leon and Luminas could do whatever they wanted with their magic and skills, but the fact that they didn’t oppose the installation suggests that they must have

seen the usefulness of this device.

After all, it could be used by anyone.

In fact, even people with very little magic power could use it.

Using the magicules collected from the atmosphere, it was possible to transfer nearly fifty people at once. This would make it easier to travel to and from countries where magic circles have been set up.

In the future, we could prepare a larger scale system, but there was still a problem in terms of efficiency.

As you know, a large number of magicules are required to transfer organisms.

If we waited for the magicules to be replenished naturally, then it would take a week to use it once. It was easy to replenish the amount of magicules if the person had as many as we did, but it would be a lot of work for humans to do so with their magic power.

If it was used to transport goods, then that could start a distribution revolution. If that happened, the magitrain we were working so hard to develop would become obsolete, and there'd be a lot of problems to solve.

The word “compartmentalization” came to mind, and so I decided to leave the effective utilization of this device as a future task.

—For that reason, I was installing “magic transfer circles,” though as a matter of fact, I had already completed them in demon lord territories.

Let's look back on the situation at that time—

.....  
.....  
...

The first one I installed was, of course, in my country of Tempest.

Just in case, I had it installed in the Isolation Room of the labyrinth. That way, it would be safe even if it was used by the enemy.

The next one I installed was in the Holy Void, Damargania.

I went with Ultima and completed it myself with little choice in the matter.

Normally, I would have just left the work to others, but this time things were different. In addition to the fact that I could not afford to take my time, Damargania was a unique location.

A long time ago, the city had been reduced to ruins by the decisive battle between Guy and Milim. However, the tragedy of that battle still affected the city to this day.

A barren land, a deadly desert. There were several reasons why it was called that.

The raging sandstorm corroded everything it touched. This sandstorm isolated Damargania from the outside world.

«At the time when the forces between Guy and Milim clashed, a catastrophic destruction occurred, and the energy was forcibly expelled to another dimension to minimize the damage. However, that power has not disappeared, but continues to leak from the dimensional rupture. That is the cause of this tragedy.»

That was Ciel-san's explanation.

It was such a long time ago, I was surprised that it was still having an effect.

Anyway, such a dangerous place was the territory of Dagruel.

In Damargania, there was a huge tower—the “Heavenward Pavilion<sup>26</sup>”—that pierced the sky. Only the area surrounding it was a barely functional safe zone called the “Holy Void.”

Outside of the ‘Barrier,’ which had existed since ancient times, there were threats that even rivaled the permafrost.

Weak monsters would be sliced to death by sand blades, and even strong monsters would be at risk of death over long periods of time. Dagruel and the other giants were no exception to this rule.

For the weak, women, and children, even if they were high ranking warriors, there were many dangers outside the safety of the Holy Void.

If even the Giant race could be reduced to such a state, then for humans, this was truly a deadly place. That's why I did the work myself this time rather than sending for Vesta and the others.

That said, all I really had to do was set up the ‘magic circle.’

The giant disk made of pure magisteel, engraved with magic formulas constructed by Ciel-san, was one meter high and seven meters in diameter, and was installed in the location specified by Dagruel. The rest of the work went to the demons who had come with Ultima.

“This is an order from Rimuru-sama! Do not embarrass me, and make sure you complete it!”

And so, the demons were given a threatening pep talk from Ultima.

It was mostly just threatening, but the demons were good at magic, so they could handle it. With that in mind, I left them in charge and retreated.

“Rimuru, are you sure it’s all right...?”

Dagruel asked me anxiously...

“Yeah, it’s fine. There’s Veyron as well as Ultima, and we can also call Zonda back if needed. The test was successful, so don’t worry about leaving the rest of the adjustments to them.”

Yes, there was nothing to worry about.

Because Ultima and the others were big time demons despite their appearances.

They probably had accumulated more wisdom than I could even imagine, so I finished the work without any worries.

“Rather than that, I was just wondering whether they would go berserk—”

“Well then, I’m off! You take care of the rest!”

Dagruel was about to say something, but I chose to ignore him.

<sup>26</sup>This translation was a bit tricky for me. I think that 天通閣 (romanized as ‘tentongkaku’ in the MTLs which made no sense) is similar to the “Tsūtenkaku (通天閣)” which is a real tower in Osaka, Japan. Based on the Chinese characters, other translations can be “Tower Reaching Heaven” or “Sky Reaching Pavilion.” For me, the “Heavenward Pavilion” sounded the best, and is what I’ll be using until actual translators decide otherwise.

It would only be a hassle to change personnel here, so I left the place as if to escape.

After Damargania was Lubelius.

I set up a ‘magic circle’ at the location Luminas had specified.

After that, it was work time for Gobkyu and the Surmounters who had come with him.

If I just left things to Gobkyu, he would construct a magnificent building as a transfer facility. And with the help of the Surmounters, they could handle the fine-tuning of the relocation information.

“I think this will work. I will keep in touch with Tempest and Damargania, and we will get it working up to a practical level!”

Now that they were taking care of it, my work here was done.

Now, as for the other matter.

Shion, her subordinates, Adalmann, and his followers were scheduled to arrive in Luminas’ country.

I had brought them all together this time, but the problem was finding an inn.

“Rest assured. There is an empty room in my temple, so you can sleep there.”

“That would be a great help. Shion, Adalmann, that’s how it is, so don’t cause any trouble.”

“Leave it to me, Rimuru-sama! As Rimuru-sama’s secretary, I shall see to it that your duties are carried out in an unashamed manner!”

I’m worried.

I’d rather you not do anything and just send me a message when the enemy attacked.

“However, it’s such a pity that I can’t cook. They say that even one day without cooking can dull one’s skills...”

Isn’t that for more delicate skills, like the piano?

Come to think of it, Shion is also good at the violin, so doesn’t she need to practice that too?

“Don’t you need to practice your instrument? You’re so enthusiastic about combat training, but I never really see you playing the violin.”

“Fufufu, don’t worry. As long as you practice daily, playing an instrument is a piece of cake. It’s more about the ability to make subtle changes of seasoning<sup>27</sup>—”

That’s crazy.

This person’s way of thinking is wrong.

I hid my disgusted expression, wondering if I should apologize to all the musicians in the country.

Shion says it’s all in the seasonings, but no matter how much you get it wrong, the taste will be guaranteed. However, too much salt is too salty, and too much sugar is just bad for your health. The correct answer is that the right amount is important.

Anyway, it’s clear that her concerns are misdirected.

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<sup>27</sup>All of the MTLs were confusing. “Sajikagen (匙加減)” is a Japanese idiom for making adjustments based on skill/feel. However, it is also the noun for “manners of seasoning.” In the next few paragraphs, they start talking about music as if it’s like cooking/seasoning, so it was hard for me to tell which translation to use.

As I was thinking this, Luminas interjected from the side.

“Shion, wasn’t it? If it’s combat training you’re looking for, I’m sure Hinata has some time. If you’d like, I can do it too, so don’t worry. Oh, and as for the cooking, I will give you an unused kitchen and arrange for the ingredients, so you can do as you please.”

I was made speechless by her words. The offer was so fearless that I was trembling.

I was so startled that I was too late to stop her.

“Lu-Luminas, letting Shion cook for you is—”

“No, I don’t mind. In this day and age, hobbies should be cherished. I also had a passion for cooking at one time. Fufufu, it would be fun to try it with you.”

“Well! That’s a wonderful idea. I won’t lose, Luminas-sama!”

“Fufu, Hinata is also very good at cooking. Let’s invite her.”

You’ve gotta be kidding.

There’s a lot to talk about here.

I could no longer handle this, let alone having Hinata join in.

I didn’t know what to do, so I left my luck to chance.

“A-Adalmann. I leave the rest to you!”

“Eh?!”

He must have had some terrible premonition. Even Adalmann, a man of great faith, could not nod his head in agreement with my words.

However, the die had been cast.

“Well then, let me know if anything happens!”

I left it at that and escaped on the spot.



The third destination was Milim’s country.

The ruins of Eurazania, which I knew quite well.

What rose from there was not a sacred mountain, but a huge structure still under construction.

I teleported to the site of the old city and waited for the pick-up.

Geld had been sent ahead of me, so I was accompanied by Gabil’s group, Carrera, and Esprit.

Gabil’s cheerleaders<sup>28</sup>, Kakushin, Sukerou, and Yashichi, and Gazat-kun, the captain of the ‘Hiryuu,’ were also there.

<sup>28</sup>The word used for these three was “Taikomochi (太鼓持).” Taikomochi are also known as male geisha’s, but in this context, they are referred to by the less formal form meaning “jester/drummer/drumbeater” or “someone who flatters.”

I don't know who Gabil's second-in-command is, but I am sure that these four stand out.

Even though the Hirayuu and others were preparing to face a decisive battle with a dangerous opponent, they all looked very happy.

The reason seemed to be because Ultima's special training had been put on hold for the time being.

It was so harsh that they all died many times. They had all lamented over being unable to stop even after death, because they were still in the labyrinth.

If you think about it, that labyrinth is a foul.

Rather than training to the point of death, you can assess your limits on the assumption that you will die.

Well, thanks to that, they seem to be improving rapidly.

Simply evolving and increasing your magicule quantity does not mean that you will become truly strong. It is only when one has mastered their power that they can be called a first-class warrior.

That said, you should not overdo it.

I wouldn't want to train like that either, so I decided I would tell Ultima to keep it in moderation.

And so, there were a little over a hundred people in total. We had been waiting here for about ten minutes now.

I told Milim that I would be here today through the 'Telepathy Net,' but maybe she forgot?

"Aren't they late?"

"There, there, Carrera-dono. We've only just arrived, haven't we? Let's wait for the pick-up with the feeling of sightseeing!"

"Gabil-dono is kind, isn't he?"

"I think Carrera-sama is just too quick-tempered."

"What did you say, Esprit?"

"No, nothing."

It's barely enough. But still enough.

I can help but understand Carrera's frustration. But that's because I still have the senses of a modern Japanese who used to live by the minute, and in this world, I'm one of the impatient ones.

We have a concept of time, and we have clocks, but they are not as elaborate as the wrist-watches worn in my previous life. It is common knowledge in this world that only aristocrats or big merchants have pocket watches which are a little bulky.

Therefore, if the time of an appointment is vague, such as in the afternoon, the general practice is to have a messenger on standby as early as possible.

In this case, it was Milim's fault for failing to do so, but it would not be mature to get angry because there was always the chance of a misunderstanding such as with the meeting time or date.

It was no use asking Carrera for help, so I decided to take the lead here.

“Don’t panic. I’ll just check with Milim.”

After saying that, I tried ‘telepathy net’ on Milim.

“Hey, Milim? I’m already here, but is there no one at the meeting place?”

“Mmm?! R-Rimuru? I’m busy with my homework, but I told Midley properly! Perhaps he misunderstood the time. I’ll give him a strong reminder, so please don’t be angry with him!”

...

You get the idea.

I guess she was so busy with the homework Frey-san gave her that she forgot to give him my message.

“I understand, no need to panic.”

“Mm, mm! I’ll see you later!”

These things happen.

With that in mind, I diligently waited for the pick-up while calming down Carrera.

However, something unexpected happened next.

One of the people who rushed over made an outrageous remark.

“Oh, you must be the Demon Lord Rimuru-sama! You are even more dignified than I had heard, and with such an impressive presence. I, Jagi, am truly impressed!”

The speaker, Jagi, bowed reverently towards Gabil.

Apparently, Jagi’s race is like a dragonewt. Unlike Gabil, Jagi has a human form, with horns growing out of the side of his head.

He is small in stature but has a sturdy physique and sharp movements.

The five majins with him did not seem to have any noteworthy characteristics other than being diverse in race.

For some reason, Jagi had scars all over his body that appeared to be freshly made. That worried me a little, but he looked fine and healthy, so I guess it wasn’t a problem. What was more troubling was Jagi’s comment itself.

I was stunned, but I think Gabil was the one who reacted with the most surprise.

“No, no, no, I’m not Rim—”

“Oh, my goodness! You don’t need to greet a low-ranking captain like me! There is not a single person under Demon Lord Milim-sama’s command who does not know your name!”

He hurriedly tried to deny it but was interrupted by that misunderstanding bastard’s outburst.

Even if you know my name, what’s the point if you don’t know my face?

There were many majins who knew my face, but it seems that this low-ranking captain was not one of them.

As for the reason why Jagi mistook Gabil for me, I think it was the haki.

I had completely suppressed my youki and outwardly appeared as a normal human being.

The same was true of Carrera and Esprit, who didn’t look like demons or even majins.

Well, because there were many human guests in Tempest, we had a habit of keeping our youki at bay.

However, things can’t go on like this.

It's been a long time since I've been treated like this, and I was enjoying it, but Carrera and Esprit have very little patience.

"Hey, that person is Gabi—"

"What's with you people? Aren't you guys supposed to be maidservants? You may be wearing a military uniform, but if you're interrupting an adult conversation, you're not getting the education you need."

And now again, he interrupted Esprit.

To be honest, I thought he was the one who lacked education.

"Wahaha, he's a pretty funny guy, isn't he?"

Carrera was laughing.

Despite her words, I could see the veins bulging on her temples.

She seemed to be trying her best to hold back.

It looks like she's three seconds away from exploding, so now is not the time to be laughing.

Just as I was thinking that, Esprit moved before me.

"Hey, can you please just listen to me?"

She said so firmly and put her hands on Jagi.

It was not so much of a punch as it was a strong action. A weaker majin would have been unable to react and probably would have been knocked unconscious by the blow to the cheek.

Normally, I should be angry with Esprit, but this time it was Jagi's fault. He mistook Gabil for me and did not listen to us.

Although it was not good to resort to violence, Carrera had been about to lash out. Esprit's action was based on her understanding of the situation, so I decided to ignore it.

I thought that if Jagi would calm down and listen to us, it would end the conversation there.

However, something unexpected happened next.

Jagi reacted to Esprit.

"Eh?"

"Hyah!"

The attack was instantaneous.

Jagi grabbed Esprit's left back fist with his right hand and twisted it lightly. As if to catch Esprit off guard, he used his right foot to sweep her off her feet while she was off balance.

Esprit leaped as if to avoid the low-kick-like sweep, or perhaps it was because she had read the attack. Then, twisting her body in midair, she threw a kick with her right foot towards Jagi's head.

Jagi dodged the kick by bending his upper body, but that was not the end of Esprit's attack.

Using her grabbed fist as an axis, Esprit kicked with her left leg, returning the kicked right leg like a pendulum.

In this way, she aimed at Jagi's neck so that her right and left legs intersected. It was an acrobatic technique, like something you might have seen in a comic book, but it would be difficult to deal with at first glance..

And yet, Jagi evaded the barrage by releasing Esprit's fist and doing a backflip.

And so, the two sides went back at it once more, but at this rate, both sides were going to end up getting serious.

“Well, you seem to be quite the pleasant young lady. The fact that you’re taking it easy on me, it’s no wonder you’re wearing a military uniform.”

Jagi snapped his neck as he began speaking.

“You’re good too, old man. I think I’m going to enjoy this a little bit, so let’s show them how serious we are, shall we?”

In response, Esprit began smiling very nicely as she cracked her knuckles.

Carrera was unperturbed.

It was obvious from her happy smile that she had no intention of stopping them as Esprit’s boss.

Gabil was very unreliable at times like these. Because of Ultima, he seemed to have been traumatized by the three demon girls. This time it was Esprit, but he didn’t seem sure if he should talk to me or not.

Gabil glanced at me.

Aw geez, it seems that I’m the only one here with any common sense.

I had no choice but to intervene.

First, I decided to call out the person in charge.

“Yes, yes, that’s enough. Jagi-san, right? You won’t talk to me, so go get your boss.”

I stepped forward and called out to him in a grandiose manner. I think I was pretty cool, but I’d give myself an eighty.

I waited for Jagi’s reply, feeling proud of myself.

And then...

“Hah? Don’t interfere in a man’s fight!”

Something like that!

I was instantly offended.

But at the next moment...

“You, you’re being disrespectful to Rimuru-sama!”

Carrera kicked him with lightning speed.

“Even I have reached the end of my patience!”

Gabil’s spear struck down the Jagi who had been blown away.

“Oh, I was late.”

There was no turn left for Esprit, who had been facing him.

And as for me...

“Ah, you guys. Nothing happened here. Okay?”

I lightly intimidated the majins that Jagi had brought with him in an attempt to destroy the evidence.



As it turned out, there was no need to threaten Jagi.

The fault turned out to be on Milim's side.

"Wahahahaha! Now you realize that it's not my fault, don't you?"

"Yeah. I had thought you forgot to tell them, but I didn't realize that you were having fun playing a winner-takes-all game to see who would pick us up..."

The winner was Jagi, but the war criminal was Midley.

"How can that be? I don't understand..."

"No, no, no, my guys are bloodthirsty, but Midley's guys are no slouches either."

Frey-san was holding her head in her hands in disgust, and Karion was laughing with his stomach.

"So, was this Jagi guy any good?"

"Well, he was strong. I'd say he was about 50/50 with Phobio-san."

I replied to Karion, who suddenly asked me with a serious face, with my honest impression.

In fact, he was slightly inferior when comparing on the amount of magicules, but his skill (level) against Esprit was quite good. He might also have shape-shifting ability like Gabil, in which case my evaluation would be even higher.

However, Phobio can also transform himself into a beast, so the gap between the two would never narrow, and I'm sure Phobio would win in a real fight.

Nevertheless, Jagi is quite skilled.

Like Midley, the priests of the Worshipers of Dragons are really strong. Because they do not rely on power alone, they are versatile and are able to use that to their advantage.

Even so, they are muscle heads.

It's quite an unfortunate reality.

"I apologize for the state of affairs. I have failed in my supervision."

With that said, Midley bowed his head.

Well, I can imagine that Jagi was also inspired by this man, so I couldn't deny that Midley was largely responsible.

"So, you're Carrera-dono, right? Gabil-dono and I would appreciate your cooperation with our country for the time being."

In times like these, it was up to Frey-san.

Karion was a great king, but he also loved to fight. He was more like Midley and had not yet abandoned his innate values that the weak were bad.

This time—or rather, we are saved in many respects because we were the strong ones. If we had been weaker, we would not have been able to negotiate as well as we did.

In that respect, I was pretty lucky.

“Well then, Carrera-san. Why don’t you have a little test of strength with me?”

You see, Karion’s got something to say.

“Hoh, that’s quite the spirit you’ve got there! Just tell me how much you want me to go easy on you.”

Don’t just join in so easily, Carrera!

“Whoa, hey now!”

“It’s fine, milord. I hear Karion-dono has evolved. So then, it’s only natural that he’d want to know how much stronger he’s become.”

“Well, that may be true, but this isn’t the labyrinth, you know? If you overdo it, you could die, so you guys have to refrain from such dangerous behavior.”

Gabil and Frey-san were the only ones who nodded at my words.

However, the others looked dissatisfied.

Especially Milim.

“Ehh, that’s boring!”

Frey-san got angry at her. ‘Don’t say that!’ she said.

But well, for practicality’s sake, I couldn’t allow it.

They couldn’t do it near the construction site, and would have to go to a place far enough away that wouldn’t be affected by the battle. To do so right here would be like asking the enemy to aim right at us.

Even so, Karion was surprisingly insistent.

“Sure, I know it’s dangerous. But I meant what I said when I said that. I want to know how strong I’ve become before the showdown.”

Karion even asked Frey-san to agree with him.

Well...

Come to think of it, I had Ciel-san.

At the time, it had just been ‘Wisdom King Raphael,’ but it still answered all my questions, so I hadn’t needed to test my strength to learn what I could do.

In the case of Karion and the others, the only way to find out was to test their strength by themselves. It made sense that the quickest way to find out was to fight the strongest person.

“I won’t deny that. But isn’t that a problem you’ve always had and will always have to deal with on your own?”

“That’s true. But the enemy won’t wait for us, you know? We have to get stronger quickly and protect the people who believe in us. To do that, we have to be willing to take some risks, don’t you think?”

“That’s...”

Frey-san lost the battle.

She seemed unable to say anything back once the duties of a king were brought up.

If he had only wanted to brag about his power, I would have dismissed it, but because he had a reason, it was a question I should consider.

“Rimuru, I agree with Karion’s opinion. I’m training him now, but I think there are limits

to what I can do.”

“Milim is right. It’s a shame, but now that I’ve awakened, I understand. I thought I had been getting stronger, but Milim still seemed so far away. And Rimuru, the difference between you and me is the same. There is a gap between you and me that cannot be bridged no matter how hard I try. On that note—”

“Fufu, do you think I can reach you? I’ve been beaten, but I think you’re right that it’s better than dealing with Milim-sama.”

I see...

I don’t think there’s much of a difference between me and Carrera in my current state...But if Karion feels that way, then it proves that his eyes are able to see the essence of things.

Guy also thought highly of Karion, and if he could use the power he had awakened, he would be a great asset in the future war.

It was also a request from Milim.

In that case, the right thing to do would be to cooperate.

“All right. Then I’ll return with Karion and Frey-san, and Carrera will stay here and defend as planned.”

“Eh? I’m the other one who—”

“There are suitable people in the labyrinth!”

“I understand. As you wish, milord.”

I feel bad for being so gloomy, but I mustn’t show my naivete here.

Carrera was overkill. Ramiris’ complaints were giving me a headache, and it was wiser to have a more sensible partner if I wanted to leave Karion and the others in charge.

Karion could have Benimaru. Or Zegion.

For Frey-san, Kumara would be a good choice.

I’d work out the details after I got back. If something happened, I could be contacted, and would immediately send them back via teleport.

“I’m sorry, I’ve been a bit selfish.”

“That’s okay. I’m only cooperating with Karion because I think he’s right. Is that okay with you, Frey-san?”

“Yes, of course. It’s very kind of you to offer, so I see no reason to refuse.”

And so that’s how it went.

Gabil and Carrera were left under Milim’s command, and Karion and the others were brought back with me.

Incidentally, Karion’s subordinates were left to their own discretion.

As long as they had not awakened, the environmental destruction wouldn’t be so bad...I think. I had sent them a large supply of recovery medicine, so they should be able to handle the rest on their own.

Benimaru and the others had gotten stronger that way, so they weren’t worried about that.

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After returning from Milim's country, Karion and the others were left in Benimaru's care and thrown into the labyrinth.

Finally, it was time to go to Leon's country.

I had sent Diablo ahead of me, but I put off my visit until the end, so he was probably waiting for my arrival by now. With this in mind, I prepared for my departure.

Leon's country—I knew where El Dorado was because Mizeri had guided me there before. Therefore, we would be there in a moment with Teleport.

“I will be your escort.”

I felt safe with Souei.

“Don't forget about me, my lord!”

Ranga poked his head out from behind me, appealing to me.

Oh good, good!

I nodded while enjoying the fluff.

He was always with me anyway, but he was cute like this.

And now...

I was somewhat reluctant to go, but I had already informed the other party. It was always better to just get the unpleasant things done quickly, so I stood up.

“Well then, let's go.”

Muttering to myself, I activated the teleport as Shuna and Rigurd saw us off.

Leon's territory was on a small continent.

Even if it was small, a continent was still a continent. It was a little bigger than Australia. There was an astonishingly vast amount of flat land with well-organized streets and cityscape.

Before Leon and the others had settled here, there had been a natural landscape of forests, plains, lakes, rivers, and mountains. It was said that the current state is the result of forcing that landscape into shape with great magic and optimizing it.

An artificial city created with the harmony of nature in mind—that was El Dorado, the city where Demon Lord Leon Cromwell resided.

“Wow, this is amazing...”

In response to my muttering, Silver Knight Alrose, who had met me at the designated spot, replied happily.

“Haha, I am honored. I am sure Leon-sama will be pleased to hear that.”

When I met him before, he had been wearing a helmet that completely hid his face, but now his face was bare.

He was not as beautiful as Leon, but he looked like a beautiful woman.

His beautiful silver hair flowed down his back, but judging by the thickness of his neck and his Adam's apple, he was definitely a man.

Incidentally, it seemed that Alrose was also the leader of Leon's subordinates, the Magic Knights.

Another person I had met, Black Knight Claude-san, was said to be the strongest, but this Alrose was also quite good. He was able to use magic without chanting and was able to invoke transference spells quite naturally. We finally arrived outside of the city—that is, outside of the city's defenses, but from there we arrived in front of the Great Gate in an instant.

The race didn't seem to be human, but they looked human. When I thought as much, I was told that they were demonoids.

They were a long-lived and magically gifted race, but it seems that they used to be human. They were born by a mutation called majinization, so their population was quite small.

Perhaps, Myuran or Razen—

«Yes, by definition, they are the same.»

I knew I was right.

Well, the term “majin” was so diverse that it was troublesome to define them in detail. If a former human was transformed into a majin, there seemed to be no problem to call them a demonoid.

Anyway, I turned my attention to the city beyond the Great Gate.

It was even greater than I expected.

The beautiful golden buildings all lined up in a row were truly magnificent.

The arrangement of the buildings had been well calculated.

In a nutshell, the shape of the buildings could be described as a six-pointed star, or a hexagonal ridge. This alone created a two-dimensional magical effect, but the amazing part began from here.

The cityscape was spiraling, gradually increasing in height from the entrance. It led to a chalk-white castle that stood majestically in the center.

A spiraling royal castle rising up as if piercing the heavens.

The size of the castle itself was not that large, but the three-dimensional structure of the entire city made it look quite enormous.

If you glanced at it from above, you would see that the city itself formed a powerful stacked magic circle. Conversely, those who did not have a bird's-eye view from above would not be able to notice the magic circle drawn by the city.

And even if you had a bird's eye view, you would not notice it unless you were conscious of it. It was such a clever and exquisite arrangement.

I, too, had dreamed up many romantic ideas for the construction of cities, but I had never thought of incorporating magic circles. It had been a long time since I'd had a great idea, and it made me feel a bit frustrated.

This well-calculated city structure stimulated my pride as a former construction worker.

Our country was undoubtedly wonderful, but we could not afford to plan our cities with such a high priority on functionality. We had Ramiris' Labyrinth to protect us, but that was really just a result of luck.

I had wanted to devise a system to maintain it with the magical power of the city's inhabitants, and achieved it in that way.

"This city itself has the effect of a powerful magic circle. I can only say it's amazing."

I felt a little defeated, so I praised it honestly.

"Oh, you can tell?"

Alrose smiled happily.

"Its effects are 'Search Enemy' and 'Countermagic,' right? It's too different in scale from normal magic to have the usual effect."

Just to give two effects to a single magic circle, you'd have to go to a lot of trouble to come up with the right arrangement. This was made possible by the scale of a city.

While drawing a magic circle with only the arrangement of the buildings, he was able to deploy tactical grade magic at all times, so the magnitude of his feat was immeasurable.

If someone entered the city without permission, they would be detected immediately. In addition, any magic attack from outside the city would be repelled.

With a magic circle of this scale, even legion magic, which specialized in attacking cities, would be easily repelled.

"Haha, you're good. You can understand that much just from a glance? There's no point in hiding it, so I'll tell you, you're right. This city has been given an Absolute Defense by magic."

Alrose replied proudly.

At that time, he smoothly explained to me that "this ward protects us from evil demons that shoot nuclear magic," but I didn't listen to him, because it seemed inconvenient for me if I pursued it too deeply.

I had a glimpse of a blonde schoolgirl-like demon flash through my mind, but I think it must have been my imagination.

I decided to arm myself with the theory by assuming as such, and praised Alrose so that it would not be pursued further.

"It would have taken an enormous amount of money and years just to achieve just one effect, wouldn't it? But two of them, while accounting for the expansion of the city's functions as they develop, were achieved so perfectly."

"That's right. It was a tremendously difficult journey, but we believed in Leon-sama and we did it."

"No, it's seriously amazing. You took something that would have been profitable if it had worked, and you succeeded."

"Hahaha, thank you. I didn't expect all of this praise. Leon-sama is the one who invented this city, so I'm sure he'll be very pleased."

No way, Leon designed this city?!

I didn't know he was a real genius...

I thought he was just a "Chloe-loving, sulky demon lord," but I guess I needed to change my perception.

This cityscape was definitely beautiful.

Because it was a reality that I had no choice but to admit, my excitement outweighed my frustration.

Souei was also observing the city with admiration, but magic wasn't his specialty. Even so, he seemed to be listening greedily to see if there was anything to be gained.

"Is it difficult to invade from the sky? In that case, we'd have to go underground..."

Wrong.

He was just thinking of a way to attack.

No, but that's important too, isn't it?

We may have a cooperative relationship right now, but we also might end up working against one another.

In any case, the combination of the city and the magic circle was wonderful.

I wanted to introduce this feature to our country, but it's not something that can be easily imitated. At least, the capital city Rimuru was complete in another sense, so it was impossible to introduce it right now.

This was a future project.

If there was ever a chance to add another city, I would try to realize my idea then.

Now I had something to look forward to when I got home.

It may be a waste of time, but I decided that I'd try designing my own magical city.



I walked through the entrance of the Great Gate and followed the glass spiral corridor.

The interior of the city was also beautiful.

In the distance, waterfalls were flowing down with great force from the man-made cliffs. The water flowed through the city's canals, creating beautiful patterns.

We walked for about ten minutes, enjoying the city in this way. Finally, we arrived at an area guarded by the knights from the general public.

"In the back of this area, there is a magic circle that leads to the front of the royal palace."

Alrose said as such while guiding us.

To our surprise, the person who greeted us at the magic circle was the lord of this land himself, Demon Lord Leon Cromwell.

I was surprised to see that he was dressed in a white shirt and jeans, which was rougher than I expected, but it looked very good on him.

A lady killer looks good no matter what he wears, I guess.

Leaning against a pillar with his arms crossed, he looked as if he were a painting.



And yet, as soon as I opened my mouth, I felt a sense of disappointment.

“Damn it, I knew Chloe wasn’t here.”

I was a little annoyed that he only had Chloe in his head.

As expected, he was definitely a “Chloe-loving, sulky demon lord,” but that was enough to convince me that he was the real Leon, so I wouldn’t complain.

Besides, Leon’s appearance was a little strange.

I thought Alrose was also good-looking, but he paled in comparison to Leon. He was still sarcastic and handsome, but he seemed to be lacking in aura.

“Of course not. More importantly, you’re looking a little haggard, aren’t you?”

“...You’re annoying. You’re the one who sent us the culprit.”

Ah!

That’s all I needed to know.

He’s probably causing trouble, I guess.

“Could it be that Diablo is...?”

“...Well...”

For a moment, a silent stare-down ensued.

Leon looked like he had something to say, but he swallowed his words and just nodded once.

Heavy.

The air was incredibly heavy.

I was led through the castle in silence.

Finally we arrived at a gorgeous and luxurious room.

The room was decorated with gold, silver and jewels, but the furnishings were elegant and not obnoxious. The wallpaper was unified in a pure white, and the jewels reflected the glow of the chandeliers.

Like Clayman’s castle, it was not in bad taste.

Rather, it was a shining example of good taste.

I guess you could say that it was luxurious enough not to be suffocating. Just as the exterior of the castle was chalk-white but not gaudy, the interior was beautiful, elegant and calm.

Even a commoner like me could relax in this place without feeling nervous. The atmosphere was heavy, but the furnishings were very comforting to me.

—Or so I thought, but then the hallway became noisy.

Even though I didn’t feel nervous, I had a feeling that I’d be getting a headache.

Naturally, I was exactly right.

“Oh, Rimuru-sama! I’ve been expecting you.”

It was Diablo.

After bowing to me reverently, he led me to the reception room quite naturally.

This is Leon’s country, you know.

I was tempted to ask him why he looked like he owned the place.

Guy came in after Diablo.

“You’ve kept me waiting long enough, Rimuru. Why did you make this place the last one?”

While saying that, he sat down on the chair facing me.

“Of course, that’s because Guy-san was here. It’s such a relief to have someone strong around, so I wonder if I even had to come here!”

I joked lightly, trying to convey my true feelings.

Guy’s temples twitched.

That was dangerous.

I’m a man who can read the atmosphere, so I decided to change the subject before Guy exploded.

“Relax. The fact is, with you and Diablo here, you could have dealt with the enemy if they had attacked, right? I was a little worried about Luminas, and as for Dagruel, I don’t even know how strong he is. It’s only natural that I should prioritize.”

“Milim is just as strong as me—”

Yes, Milim is also strong. I knew exactly what Guy meant, but there was a good reason for this.

“Milim’s territory is undertaking construction work. For me, who’s creed is credit first, I had no choice but to give them priority.”

With that, I put on a smug face.

Milim is, after all, a very important friend of mine, and she’s helped me a lot. It was only natural that I should repay her, and there was no need to even ask who was more important between her and Guy.

She might’ve gotten into some trouble, but it was mutual.

“Tsk, well whatever. So, how are the other demon lords doing?”

The good thing about Guy is that he can quickly switch gears.

I was relieved to see that even though he was annoyed about being put off, he still kept a clear head and a sound judgment.

“For the time being, I’ve installed “magic transfer circles” in each country. The fine adjustments are still being worked out, but there should be no problem activating them in case of an emergency.”

While saying this, I opened the ‘Stomach’ a little to reveal a magisteel disk. It was so big that it was a pain to take out.

“I’ll install it if you specify the location.”

“Hmm, I’ll show you that later.”

Leon interjected.

No wait, Leon is the master of this castle, so that was a good thing. Guy’s attitude was so pompous that I almost misunderstood him.

“Hmm, I’m glad that you’ve prepared for emergencies in time. So now we just have to wait for the enemy to attack?”

“Well, yeah. As for me, I’ll be cleaning up after the war with the Empire and strengthening ties with the Western Nations.”

“You can’t expect humans to be a force to be reckoned with, can you?”

“Yeah. So, they’ll be doing evacuation drills. They’re going to do their best not to get caught up in our own war and destroy civilization.”

The people living in the capital Rimuru would be safe, but it was hard to predict how much damage would be done to the rest of the world. That’s why we were trying to get REG to set up some kind of shelter.

Myourmiles-kun has been working very hard.

I was planning to give him a consolation prize once things settled down, as I feel he’s been doing too much work.

Incidentally, the imperial subjects may be essential to Michael’s skill, but it was safer to assume that they were not absolute.

Since I had suggested killing all of the imperial subjects, I think Michael was taking measures against them. It could be said that he had arranged for this to happen, but there was no way to confirm this until we fought.

“Hmmm, you’ve had it tough, too.”

Guy was surprised, but that’s just who I am.

Having gone through so much trouble to successfully establish diplomatic relations with human society, it is my country’s supreme mission to maintain them.

I couldn’t stand the thought of Michael and the others destroying it, as if to trample on all the hard work we had done.

Even Leon spoke to me in exasperation.

“You’re even more of a softy than I thought, looking out not only for your own country but also for others. Do you think your hands are limitless?”

Well, he has a point.

I don’t think I can do everything, either.

But even so, I’ve had enough of losing without doing anything.<sup>29</sup>

“I just don’t want to regret anything. I’ll do everything I can. If that doesn’t work, I can just give up.”

No, if it didn’t work, I wouldn’t be able to give up and I’d probably regret it.

However, I was working to prevent that from happening, and until an unhappy future was confirmed, I would live in pride with myself.

It is impossible to deceive yourself.

That is why I have no choice but to live a life I am satisfied with.

“Huh, I have had nothing but regrets. Maybe that’s why she chose you instead of me.”

Was he talking about Chloe?

There was a weight to Leon’s words that I could not ignore.

There is no doubt that Leon had done a lot of reckless things. Maybe he’s warning me that if I’m not careful, I might end up like him.

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<sup>29</sup>Another translation might be, “there are so many things to lose if I don’t do anything.”

With that in mind, I decided to laugh off Leon's worries.

"Unlike you, I'm not a loli-siscon—I'm a sensible person who's considerate of the people around me, so your worries are unfounded."

"Fuck off, I'll kill you."<sup>30</sup>

Curiously enough, we got into a tense situation, and our argument continued until Guy intervened.



"Really, I was hoping things would get better when you came, but it looks like I was mistaken."

For some reason, Guy complained to me, looking very tired.

I wasn't sure what he was expecting from me, but I didn't understand.

"Kufufufu. Why don't we just settle things here? Fortunately, Mizeri and the others are getting used to setting up 'damage reduction barriers.'"

So you want me and Leon to fight and settle this?

"Hey you, a demon lord shouldn't be doing something so unreasonable."

"Please do not worry. There is no need to bother Rimuru-sama, I will take care of this."

Diablo's eyes narrowed as he looked at Leon. He looked at him as if he were a Predator stalking its prey. This guy might really be serious.

I couldn't tell who would win, and I'd be lying if I said I didn't care. But even so, it would be out of line in many ways to allow it to happen.

"I'm telling you that the damage would be enormous! I thought I told you that your mission was to protect Leon—and now you're going to try and fight him? That's more than a little out of line!"

As I lectured Diablo, he pouted in disappointment.

He didn't seem to be very sorry, but he had grown up a bit, so I let him off the hook.

"Tell him more, Rimuru. He's a real bastard, you know! Even yesterday, he came at me and destroyed the training grounds even though I took it easy on him."

No, I'm not so sure about that.

Without knowing what caused the fight, I can't say for sure who's at fault.

Or rather—

"Eh? You and Diablo fought?"

"Yeah. I've been bored lately, so I've been doing some light exercising."

I don't understand.

So Diablo and Guy had fought, but it was incredibly hard to put into words. It seemed to

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<sup>30</sup>"Fuzakeru na" can also mean "don't mess around/don't be silly," but it also means "fuck off" or "stop fucking around" if used in an aggressive manner like Leon is using with Rimuru.

have happened yesterday, so I was just glad it wasn't today.

When I looked over at Leon, he was sighing very unhappily.

"It all started when that maid picked a fight with Diablo. She was beaten to a pulp and fled, cursing her defeat..."

Leon's gaze caught Raine's as if to say, "That's the maid."

"No way, you've got to be kidding me. I am not a sore loser, and I didn't lose in the first place!"

But you don't deny that you had a fight...

"Your subjective opinions are not worth listening to."

Leon cuts off Raine's words.

It was Diablo who picked up from there.

"Kufufufu. As for me, I dislike bullying the weak. I let her off the hook."

"Ah? Didn't I tell you I'd get serious next time? Did you misunderstand me because I took it easy on you?"

"Did you forget that you brought Mizeri to challenge me in a two-on-one match? Next time, I'll have to discipline you harder."

While Diablo remained calm, Raine taunted her opponent as if to encourage the other. I was worried that they were going to use force, but strangely enough, they didn't.

"What a pain in the ass these two are...they came to an agreement before we knew it."

Guy said so incredulously.

It seems that the quarreling was a regular occurrence, and was quite cute.

"They've been fighting every day for the last two weeks. Before we knew it, they were on the same page."

Leon's affirmation lent credence to Guy's story.

And if that was true, then it could be understood that the imbalance of forces had become quite troublesome.

"No way. What proof do you have for that kind of crap?"

"Did you really think we wouldn't find out? In yesterday's fight, you were shouting out stuff like, 'Fuck you!' and 'Show some more fighting spirit, Diablo!'"

Raine tilted her head and asked curiously, but Leon replied without changing his expression.

Then Guy's voice overlapped, sounding disgusted.

"Raine, you're revealing your true colors. I mean, you were rooting for Diablo instead of me..."

"No way. I would never use such vulgar language, and I am Guy-sama's loyal follower. Leon-sama must be mistaken."

She said that without hesitation, this person.

I hadn't noticed it while she was looking serious, but she must be the youngest, right?

She's the type who doesn't think twice about what she says or does and believes she can do whatever she wants. People who were loved by their older brothers and sisters tended to be like this.

However, it was obvious which side was right after listening to all this.

“Diablo, how did you guys get like that?”

Diablo would never lie to me, so I put the question to him directly.

Diablo smiled and answered.

“It is all thanks to the majesty of Rimuru-sama. I told Raine the story of Rimuru-sama, and she was also converted because of it!”

Scary!!

‘Brainwashing’—is what I was about to say, but I swallowed my words.

“I-is that so?”

“Actually, I’m a fan of Rimuru-sama. In exchange for a few stories from Diablo, I’ve decided to help you out a bit.”

Raine said with a curtsy.

Perhaps this person is really self-centered?

Diablo is the same way, so it makes sense that they would get along.

“O-oh...”

What else can I say?

I looked at Guy in a bit of distress, but he was shaking his head as if to say it was too late.

“Sorry about my idiots.”

“No, no, Diablo’s is also annoying, so we’re in the same boat.”

I felt that Guy was also having a hard time, and the familiarity I had felt before grew stronger.

Incidentally, Mizeri, who had always kept her face expressionless, reacted unusually to Guy’s words.

“...Eh? Isn’t it possible that I’ve always been treated like an idiot because of Raine...?”

Well, it looks like you’ve realized the truth.

I didn’t want to say it out loud, but I think that was the correct answer.

But since it was not good to interfere with other people’s affairs, I pretended not to have heard her murmurings.

After chatting for a while, I was led to a hidden room behind the audience chamber where the throne was located, where I set up a “magic transfer circle.” It weighed several tens of tons, so it would be troublesome to move it once it was installed.

Then, having finished my business, I quickly took my leave.

Leon seemed to have wanted me to take Diablo and Raine, but that would interfere with the mission. Even if it didn’t, I had no intention of taking them with me, so I decided to just have Leon put up with it.

And then we began our farewells.

“Take care of Chloe.”

Leon reminded me.

I didn’t need to be told, so I nodded and said, “I’ll take care of her.”

Leon seemed to be convinced and gave up surprisingly well. It's a secret that I was a little surprised, because I had thought he would be more persistent in getting involved.

He was a pretty cool guy when he was behaving normally.

Not only that, but a surprising truth came to light.

In fact, Leon and I had the same taste.

I don't mean that we're lolicons, okay?

Rather, Leon's dream was to be an architect.

No wonder he has a great aesthetic sense.

I heard this during our chat while complimenting the city and the castle. I was convinced, because I had already admitted that Leon's sense of style was one of the best in the world.

He's rude, but is actually a good guy. That was my new opinion of Demon Lord Leon.

With that feeling in mind, my relationship with Leon was improved, and my visit to El Dorado ended successfully.



After returning from Leon's country, I continued to vigorously travel around the world.

The purpose of this was to strengthen cooperation with other countries, as we did not know when the enemy would attack.

Because I had prepared an emergency means of transportation between demon lords, it was only natural that I should set up such means in other friendly countries as well.

The first place I went to was the Dwarven Kingdom.

Currently, Agera was dispatched to Gazel.

I had received a report that she was training with Gazel, so I thought I would check the results of her training.

I teleported to the main gate of Dwargon.

As always, there was a long line of merchants and adventurers. I walked past them to the nobleman's passage and called out to the gatekeeper.

Then, I was ushered into the royal castle without any waiting.

I am still a small-time citizen, so I feel superior in such a situation. I was aware of my small stature, so I was careful not to make a big show of it.

I was greeted by Gazel.

"I've been waiting for you, Rimuru."

Of course, Agera was with him.

"My lord, I am glad to see you are well."

He kneels down grandly and says a few words of greeting to me.

It was like something out of a period drama, but very well done.

And this Agera, surprisingly, is the reincarnated form of Hakurou's grandfather. I was surprised when Carrera told me about it, but as I observed him more carefully, I found that his mannerisms were very similar to mine.

I remembered that I had wanted to have an interview with him, but had not had a chance to do so. It would be a good idea to talk to him after this.

With that in mind, I returned the greeting.

"Long time no see, King Gazel. It's good to see you. And Agera, too."

"Hahaha! You're still so formal. As I always say, feel free to call me Gazel."

"Well, I'm trying to, but I get so nervous when I see you in these situations. It reminds me of the trial, and I'm still a small-time citizen after all."

I can't get rid of my small-town feeling, but I think I'm cute like that.

After all, it would be strange not to get nervous in front of such a big person.

Vaughn-san and Dolph-san were watching our conversation with a warm feeling.

So did Souei.

Agera interjected.

"From my point of view, I should do as my lord wills, but Carrera-sama would scold me if I said that. In the first place, as the ally of the Alliance, you are on equal footing. You should not be shy about being in front of King Gazel, and I hope you will respond with dignity."

"Well, I guess I know what I'm doing."

Needless to say, I understood, but I had been an office worker up until a few years ago. Unless I was angry, or focused, or caught up in some big event that I couldn't afford to be in, I would revert to my normal self.

"Good, I can understand Rimuru's feelings. Even I get nervous when I'm in front of the Heavenly Emperor Elmesia."

"Oh, so King Gazel had such a person—"

"However! You are able to talk to the Emperor with ease, even though I am not very good at it! That's what I can't figure out!!"

That's right.

It was so right that I couldn't argue about it.

So Gazel told me to be less formal with him, and I said I would do my best.

But, well, I respect him because he's someone I can rely on somehow. It's difficult to fix this behavior.

"But in some cases, you give the right response at the right time, so it's not that much of a problem, right?"

"You idiot. It is in such situations that one's usual habits come out. To avoid failing on the big stage, one should always reexamine their own behavior."

I was taught another lesson.

Because I was often lectured like this, I tended to revert to my old behavior.

El-tan also gives me a lecture sometimes, but she's always on and off.

In that sense, she might just be trying to make it easier for me and Myourmiles-kun to get along with her—maybe I’m just overthinking it.

In any case, I kept Gazel’s suggestion in mind for future reference.

We moved to the parlor.

With drinks in hand, we reported on our recent activities.

The most important purpose of the meeting was to exchange information.

“So how do we avoid the war—?”

“Unfortunately, I don’t think it can be avoided. I’ve just set up ‘magic transfer circles’ between the demon lords to allow for emergency travel.”

“Hmm… One problem goes, and another one follows. To be honest, I thought it was over when Velgrynd-sama became an enemy. Now that she’s on our side… Michael, was it? I don’t think he’s the one we should be worried about now.”

Well, I wasn’t looking to praise myself, but our forces surpass those of the Empire in its prime. In addition to that, we have demon lords, Velgrynd, and even Veldora, so Gazel seems to think that we have no reason to lose.

However, that is a naive perception.

“No, they are strong opponents. Even judging by power alone, its scale is incomparable to the Empire.”

“I understand. I’m not underestimating them, quite the opposite actually.”

“The opposite?”

“I don’t think I’ll be able to help you no matter how hard I try, so I’ve come to the point of resignation.”

“Ah, that’s…”

Well, yeah, that’s true.

No matter how powerful Dwargon was, victory would be impossible if Velzard targeted them.

I can understand why he might want to give up because the individual enemy is too strong.

“However, I won’t let them destroy us easily. Worst case scenario, we’ll be ready to take our chances.”

Gazel barked out, full of spirit.

His resolve was unquestionably genuine.

The fact that he did not run away from Velgrynd made it clear that he was someone who would take on a battle he knew he would lose.

While thinking of Gazel in a reassuring way, I continued my story.

“If you can’t win, you should think of a way to win, right?”

Quality was more dangerous than quantity. What’s worse was the fact that Velzard was hostile.

This made Veldora useless.

The only people who can take on Velzard properly are Guy and Velgrynd.

Me?

I'd rather not, so I'm determined to escape at all costs.

"A war between true dragons is like a battle of the gods."

"True. That's what it feels like. But I can't just run away."

"Do you really think you can win?"

"No! But I'm willing to work hard to improve my odds."

"Fufufu, you little bastard."

Gazel nodded at me with a wry smile.

The truth is that I really didn't know what I was going to until I tried, but I'll just make sure I can escape if I don't think I can win.

I've tried to make myself look good, but there is no point in arguing about whether we can win or not before we have even analyzed the enemy's strength. The point is that I'm just trying to be prepared for what to do if we're about to lose.

"So, I need your help."

"Very well. I'll lend you my cooperation, and you can do whatever you want."

Gazel readily agreed to my request for help.

I immediately requested the installation of a 'magic transfer circle.'

Unlike the previous installations for personal use, the location of this one was also important.

"I'm amazed that you were able to create such a high purity magisteel."

"I'm cheating on that by using my Skill. Normally, I'd wait for the crafters to mature, but the enemy won't wait for me."

"—Well, I guess. You can leave the adjustments to me."

I thanked Gazel and set up the magic circle for the transfer at the place he had instructed.

Having successfully accomplished my goal, I moved on to chatting.

"So, how are the results of your training?"

"Hmm. You are the grandfather of Master Hakuro and the founder of Oboro-Ryu, Ageradono. You've made me realize that I still have a long ways to go!"

"Don't be modest, King Gazel. You have already mastered the secret art of the 'Five Flower Strikes Gokatotsu'<sup>31</sup> and are aiming for even greater heights."

In the Oboro-Ryu, it is said that the Five Flowers Strikes (Gokatotsu) and above are considered secret techniques.

Zakuro (Pomegranate) – or the 'Rokkazan' is a high-speed slashing blow intended to be non-lethal.

Yanagi (Willow) – or the 'Nana Nagi' is a sword technique that softly parries the enemy's attack.

The number of moves increases with slashes and stabs.

<sup>31</sup>Not 100% sure, but I think that "Gokatotsu (五華突)" roughly translates to something like the "Five Flower Slash/Strikes."

And then finally, the highest technique is said to be attained, the Yaezakura (Cherry Blossom<sup>32</sup>) – or the ‘Hakkasen.’

It is said that this is a sword art that should be kept secret from the public, but Agera intended to pass it on to Gazel without reserve.

“I heard from Hakurou that his grandfather showed him the ‘Hakkasen?’”

“Yes. It was before I was reincarnated, so I’m not sure my memory is correct, but I seem to remember showing it to him once or twice. If he was able to reproduce it, then he is undoubtedly a genius. I am ashamed to say that I am boasting about my grandson, but I am not Byakuya Araki, his grandfather. I would like to honestly praise the predecessors of the monster country.”

Agera said so, shyly and proudly.

“No, Hakurou is my master as well. I don’t feel bad about the praise, I feel happy about it.”

“That’s right. The teachings of Agera-dono have been passed on to Hakurou-dono. When you think about it, fate really is a mysterious thing.”

Gazel agrees with my words and smiles happily.

Agera watched us and nodded, deeply moved.

“So, Rimuru. If you don’t mind, I’d like to hear your thoughts. Is that okay?”

“If I’m able to understand.”

“Well, I’ve mentioned this before, but I’d like to ask you about the Ultimate Skill. If I continue to hone my sword skills, do you think I can defeat an Ultimate Awakened?”

Oh, that’s quite the direct question.

Depending on the situation, it wouldn’t be impossible to win. It would be a very tough fight, but not impossible.

“The lesson I have learned is that Ultimate Skills can only be countered by Ultimate Skills. It’s better to think that you can’t compete at the Unique Skill level.”

“So, is there...”

“However, if certain conditions are met, I think it should be possible.”

“Well, what are those conditions?”

“For example, Yuuki Kagurazaka’s ‘Anti-Skill’ was a nasty super-specializing ability that blocked my powers. Also, Diablo overwhelmed and ultimate gift owner with his magic alone.”

“Hmm—”

“It’s only a possibility, but I think that the key is willpower. If a mental life form exists only by will power, it seems to be able to resist the ultimate power even without an Ultimate Skill. I think this guess is correct with a high degree of certainty.”

I didn’t want to be definitive, but I thought it was almost certain because it actually was in agreement with Ciel-san’s view.

So, the key is—

“So it’s a matter of whether I can increase my willpower to the point where it rivals that of a spiritual life form? Then, after the way of the sword—”

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<sup>32</sup>Specifically, the Yaezakura is a cherry blossom with more than 5 petals)

“There may be a quicker way.”

“What?!”

“It seems that if you are recognized by mythical-grade armor, you can become the equivalent of a spiritual life form.”

This was the answer.

Well, there was also the foul technique of granting power, but as they say, ‘too much power can destroy you.’

Or was it “greed” instead of “power”?

It may have been changed from the original parable, but I think it still conveys my point.

You can’t master the power if you don’t have the strength to handle it.

That’s why I don’t grant skills to all of my subordinates. Also, there was no way that I was going to do that to Gazel. He’d have to do his best on his own.

In the first place, I can’t grant Skills unto someone who is not connected to my soul. I awakened Raine and Mizeri, but that’s not the same thing as this.

So this time, I think getting mythical-grade is probably the best solution.

That said, mythical-grade equipment is not so easy to obtain.

I have also been trying to analyze Hinata’s Holy Spirit Armor and mass produce it, but no matter how hard I try, I can’t seem to get it to reach the legendary-grade. If I put it on, I might be able to reach the power of Saint, but I don’t think it’s enough to compete with an Ultimate Skill.

“Mythical-grade, huh?”

Gazel muttered and looked at his own sword.

The well-used sword was probably of Legendary-grade. It also seemed to be a fairly high-ranking sword. However, there were countless scars on the blade.

“This was the result of clashing with Kondou’s sword. It was fortuitous that it didn’t break, but this sword’s life is over.”

Indeed.

It must have been a national treasure passed down from generation to generation. And yet, now that it was like this, it could only be kept on display.

No, but perhaps…

“Shall I ask Kurobee? Maybe he can bring the sword back to life.”

“What? Is that true?!”

“I can’t promise anything, but Kurobee has a proven track record of renewing Gabil’s spear.”

Kurobee had repaired Gabil’s Vortex Spear using the hihirokane I provided, and it was reborn at a stage just short of mythical-grade.

With continued use, it would eventually evolve into a mythical-grade model.

I still have a surplus of hihirokane left over…

“The sword doesn’t seem to be dead, so maybe—”

“Please. I don’t care if you fail, just ask Kurobee-dono!!”

It’s a great service, but I’ll spare no expense for my senior apprentice. He’s always been

such a great help to me, and this is the time I should return the favor.

With that in mind, I accepted the sword from Gazel.

“Aside from the sword though, is there any other way to get mythical-grade equipment?”

“Do you think there is? Since you don’t seem to know anything about common sense, let me tell you that even something legendary-grade is a national treasure. And it’s from a major country. You wouldn’t find them in an empire, let alone the middle of nowhere.”

Please don’t be so shocked.

I thought that would be the case.

“The result of my research is the same. I had us search all over the Western Nations’ back routes, but I’ve only managed to find a few Legendary-grade items.”

Now that Souei had confirmed Gazel’s words, the remaining hope was left to Kurobee.

Incidentally, Souei’s twin swords were also renewed by Kurobee’s hand. Unfortunately, it did not reach the mythical-grade, but with Souei’s ability, that was not a big problem. On the contrary, he thinks positively that there is room for growth.

“There’s no point in asking for what you don’t have. More importantly, do you think you can compete with an Ultimate Skill if you become a spiritual life form?”

“That’s not an absolute either. It’s natural that there are differences between individuals depending on the number of years they’ve lived, but a newborn archdemon still seems to be useless. If one has a strong will and the mental strength (energy) to support it, then they can resist the ultimate power.”

“Meh, your explanation is too vague to understand...”

No, I don’t think that’s the case.

But if you’re going to go that far, I’ll make it simple.

“In short, it’s about spirit!”

I didn’t want to say this because it was more of a gut feeling.

It would be a mistake to think that you can cover up anything with fighting spirit, but when it comes to an Ultimate Skill, other explanations were more difficult to explain than this.

For the most part, since we live in a world where a flash of a sword can split the atmosphere in a flash of light, there may not be much difference between swordplay and magic.

If you train your willpower, you can distort even the laws of the world.

—It is easier to understand and everything will be all right if we assume that it is.

After listening to my explanation, Gazel became serious and fell silent.

I glanced at Agera, who was also looking thoughtful.

Then, Souei opened his mouth.

“It is exactly as Rimuru-sama says. As a recipient of an Ultimate Gift myself, I cannot speak too much, but I do feel that if I put my spirit on my sword, I can kill any opponent.”

Agera nodded his head in agreement.

“That is true. In my case, it was as if I sublimated all my will into a blade. With the will to kill the enemy itself, my own body becomes the blade, and I believe that nothing cannot be killed by my sword. Therefore, it can kill even formless things.”

That's right, Agera's skill was 'Blade Transformation.'

If we were to simply compare the existential value, Agera's transformed sword would not be better than the mythical-grade. However, Agera was superior in its sharpness. It is said that mythical-grade has a will, but it is still not as strong as a human's will.

Ranga popped his head out of my shadow and joined the conversation.



“My case was a little different. I was asleep in my lord’s shadow when I suddenly felt as if I had heard a strange voice, and then it hit me: ‘Stellar Wind King Hastur.’ But I think it was because I kept wishing to be of service to my Lord that it took shape in this way!”

‘Hahahah,’ Ranga said happily.

Maybe he’s gotten smarter lately, but his lower body was still in my shadow. So, I couldn’t see it, but I guessed that his tail was wagging as hard as it could.

It’s really cute.

I used to be a cat person, but recently I’ve come to think that dogs are nice too. I think that Ranga was a significant contribution to this change of mind.

Anyway, I hope the stories from Souei, Agera, and Ranga will be helpful.

“Spirit, huh?”

“Well, there’s no need to be hasty. If the enemy attacks while I’m here, then I’ll help you. Please don’t hesitate to ask me.”

That would be certain.

Between Gazel’s power and Agera’s swordsmanship, I think they would be a good match even if the opponent was Kondou. At the very least, it would buy some time.

However—

“If your opponent is Velzard-san, you’d better run away without hesitation. She’s probably not the kind of opponent you can fight.”

“Is that it?”

“Yeah. I can’t say for sure because I haven’t seen her in action, but she felt creepier than Velgrynd-san.”

“Mmm...I hate to admit it, but you’re probably right. As for me, after seeing Velgrynd, I understand how reckless it is to challenge a True Dragon. But as a king, I can’t abandon my people.”

“Then we can only pray that Velzard does not attack. If she does, let me know,” I said, gesturing to my mobile phone.

“Hm, you have it!!”

“As I’ve said before, it’s a magical device that allows you to talk directly to someone. There aren’t many of them made yet, so take good care of it.”

That said, I only gave him my personal number and the direct line to the Control Room. I didn’t give him El-tan’s or Myourmiles-kun’s numbers.

I think it is bad etiquette to not ask such things directly from the people themselves. I remember being annoyed when my cell phone number was given to my business partners without my permission before I died.

“I see, so if you type in the number you have on file, you’ll be connected to the other party.”

“That’s right. Not many people have this, but if they do, ask them for the number.”

“Mm. If you need help with something, you can ask me.”

“Well, that’s the way it’s supposed to work. Call me if you need anything, and I’ll see what I can do.”

"All right, I'm counting on you. Of course, if there's anything I can do, don't hesitate to ask me. Personally, I'll do everything I can to help."

Gazel and I laugh at each other.

I don't think it's likely that Dwargon will be targeted, but I'm relieved. And thus ended the discussion on emergency response.



After staying in the Dwarven Kingdom for a few days, the next stop was the Kingdom of Farmenas.

This is where Gadra is staying.

Gadra, who had become Diablo's disciple, was also helping Testarossa. It seems that Gadra was forced to give up all of the information on the empire in order to secure Masayuki's accession to the throne.

He seemed to have been busy going back and forth between the two countries, but now he was settled in the Kingdom of Farmenas.

I thought I'd take this opportunity to ask him some questions.

The capital of the Kingdom of Farmenas was livelier than I had imagined.

The city had been under construction when I came here before, and it still was. The difference between now and then was that more areas had been cleaned up.

In the outskirts of the capital, a large station had been completed. In the vicinity of the station, there were warehouses.

Because it was a relay point between Blumund and Dwargon, it was necessary to have a place to store various goods. The station building was constructed adjacent to the capital since it was not possible to secure a place in the capital.

The reason why the construction of Royal Capital was postponed was that the priority was placed on economic activities for the future.

Another reason may be that the current Farmenas family had no money.

To put it simply, I was lending them all the money for the construction.

The contract for laying the rails for the magitrain was managed by our country. At first glance, this may seem like a generous thing, but that is a shallow view. The fee for the use of the railroad would become our country's income, and we had placed the unbeatable condition that the expenses for the use of the land would be free forever.

Once the construction was finished, all we'd have to do was sit and wait for the money to be collected. Even after deducting the labor cost, the maintenance cost of the train, the maintenance cost of the rails, etc., the annual profit was estimated to be quite large.

That's why I was responsible for the magitrain project, but Farmenas was responsible for the urban development of the surrounding area.

Myuran was mainly in charge of planning the development of the city, but she was forced to take a leave of absence due to childbirth. It was Youm, who became the king, who rose to the occasion.

He had said that he was uneducated, but he still had a good head on his shoulders. He took the initiative to study hard in order to replace Myuran, who had become immobile. As a result, even now that Myuran has recovered from childbirth, she is struggling to lead the nobles and officials.

To support Youm, I gave him a low-interest, unsecured loan.

Why not interest-free, you say?

If the loan was interest-free, the borrower would inevitably feel indebted to the lender and become reserved. In addition, the lender might feel superior to the borrower, and the relationship may become one that cannot be called equal.

Lending and borrowing money between friends can be the biggest cause of losing friendship. That's why we made the contract between the two countries and concluded it in a firm form so that both parties would be satisfied and both parties would benefit from it.

For this reason, the construction work was done in such a way as to prioritize economic activities, and the development of the city began to follow suit.

While we finished the reception at the gate and looked at the lively city, a horse-drawn carriage was expressly prepared for us.

Normally, we should have been accompanied by our own officials, like a procession of feudal lords. However, this was an emergency, and there was no time for an elegant trip by train, so I used Teleport to get here along with Souei and Ranga as my companions.

The reason why I contacted Gadra and asked him to prepare a carriage was to keep a low profile in the Kingdom of Farmenas.

I was relieved to know that he had sent a carriage to pick us up.

Unlike Milim's country, this one was very thorough.

"Thank you for your patience. King Youm is waiting for you. I will take you to the castle."

Or rather, it was Gadra who got out of the carriage.

That wasn't a bad idea.

"Whoa, that surprised me. You didn't have to come all the way to the gate."

"That's not possible. Such a prestigious role would not have been possible without such an opportunity. But more than that, if I did not greet Rimuru-sama, Diablo-sama would surely have me executed."

Gadra laughed, but it did not sound like a joke.

"If he's bullying you, why don't you tell me? For the time being, you're under my direct control."

It was a little disconcerting calling an old man like Gadra “you,<sup>33</sup>” but I’m afraid I am getting used to it.

I would like to advise Gadra, thinking about it.

Diablo may be quiet in front of me, but he tends to be reckless when I’m not looking. If he does so in Leon’s country, that’s a laughing matter, but it becomes a big problem if he does so within Tempest’s group.

Gadra is apparently Diablo’s disciple, or rather, his faction, so he can’t complain openly. That’s why I, as his boss, should follow him from behind the scenes.

But Gadra laughed and said it was no problem.

Apparently, no hardship is too great to gain knowledge.

It’s difficult to understand people with unique idiosyncrasies.

It was best not to interfere in such cases, and I vowed again to let Gadra do as he pleased.

I boarded the carriage and received a report from Gadra about Masayuki’s coronation.

The carriage moves slowly through the city, so I make the most of the time.

“So, Masayuki’s coronation went well, huh?”

“Yes, sir. It went very well. With Testarossa-sama and Velgrynd-sama working together to encourage him, it would have been impossible for him to fail.”

“Well, that would definitely be the case if those two are on our side.”

If they weren’t, that would be a problem, but I only got the impression that it would be.

To begin with, Masayuki was a lucky man. On top of that, with such brilliant figures on his side like Testarossa and Velgrynd, the incarnation of power, I truly believed that no one would be able to oppose him.

“The people, who had seen Velgrynd-sama’s majesty, seemed to welcome the crowning of the new Emperor Masayuki-sama. I mean, who could resist the sight of that?”

Gadra assures us.

Well, it’s only natural that no one can complain when they are shown the overly grandiose match-pump that erupted a volcano to prevent its threat.

It seems to me that Velgrynd knows no bounds when it comes to treating volcanoes as matches.

“Some people are still dissatisfied, but I’m sure Testarossa-sama will take care of them.”

“Is it going to work?”

“No problem. Calgurio-dono and others were worried that Testarossa-sama would kill all of the dissenters, but their fears were unfounded. It seems that the information I provided was put to good use, and I was impressed by Moss-sama’s skill. I’m sure he will be able to take advantage of the enemy’s weakness and settle this matter in a perfect manner.”

Well, that’s true.

I wouldn’t want to make enemies with those two, either.

<sup>33</sup>He uses informal honorifics (‘omae’) when speaking with Gadra. It is common in Asian culture to refer to the elderly with a formal tone.

“If there’s anyone brave enough to oppose us, we can recruit them in our country.”

“You’re right!”

“I can only say Yes<sup>34</sup>. ”

“You’re absolutely right. I’d feel the same way if I saw that scene.”

Gadra and I laugh at each other.

As I thought, Gadra is a delightful old man.

It seemed that our hearts were connected because of our shared impression.



Inside the castle, we were greeted by the king and queen, Youm and Myuran, as well as all of their ministers.

Edmalis, the former King of Farmus, was also there, but he had lost weight and shaved his beard, so he looked different from when I met him. The light in his eyes was not cloudy, which made me think so even more.

It would be awkward for both of us to talk to him, so I let him pass.

Although this visit was unofficial, I informed them that the purpose of my visit was about the upcoming disaster.

It would be great if we could avoid war, but everyone understood that it was too optimistic.

The Kingdom of Farmenas is a newborn nation and has no financial resources to spare. It relies on loans from our country, as I mentioned earlier.

Moreover, their military power had not recovered.

Training knights is not something that can be done overnight, not to mention that they have no money to hire mercenaries. I was not going to take the blame for that, even though I had something to do with it.

Because if you care about everything, you can’t have justice.

I don’t believe that everything I do is right, but from an official standpoint, I will shout for justice. If I don’t, the victims won’t be happy.

That’s why even though I feel liable, I do not speak of it.

However, as an ally, I will provide as much assistance as possible.

Sending Gadra is part of that, and Youm and the others understand as such. In other words, this country’s vassals are facing the reality that they can’t afford to get into a quarrel with me.

“Boss, has the situation improved?”

Youm asked on behalf of everyone.

“The demon lords and I have made a lot of arrangements, but to be honest, it’s a bit of a crapshoot. I’m not sure if that’s enough, which is why I’ve been traveling around.”

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<sup>34</sup>Rimuru actually says “Yes” in English for this sentence. “I-esu”

The situation had been explained via Gadra, so there was no major confusion. He also showed me where to install the ‘magic transfer circle’ without me having to say a word.

“You can ask Gadra here about the fine-tuning and how to use it.”

“Leave it to me.”

“So this is your escape plan in case of emergency. But, you know, it’s really a question of where you choose.”

“Well, yeah. The place where you escape might not always be safe, and it may only be a temporary relief.”

“Well, it doesn’t matter where I run to if the boss’ country falls. In that case, I’ll just resign myself to the fact that it was meant to be.”

Youm said so cheerfully, and his vassals nodded in agreement.

It seems that people in this country are more afraid of me than I thought. At the same time, there seemed to be a strange belief prevailing in the country that there was no point in doing anything if I could not win.

“Hey, hey, don’t be so irresponsible, just keep struggling until the end, okay?”

“Of course. My daughter was just born, so I’m not going to end my life! But still, why hasn’t she called me ‘papa’ yet?!”

Youm had become a great parental fool.

He was poking at Meme, the baby in Myuran’s arms, and grumbling like that.

“No, I don’t know about that, but... Too much attention will wake her up.”

Myuran, who was taking care of Meme, would have been furious if that happened, so I casually warned him. This kind of casual consideration is the sign of a capable man. Maybe.

“Please tell him more. He seems to lose his calm judgment when it comes to this child.”

Myuran said in a disgusted tone.

I can imagine that’s how he usually behaves.

“It’s because there’s a shitty wolf who claims my daughter is his daughter, so I can’t be too careful!”

That’s what Youm says, but I don’t understand.

“What nonsense! I’m the guy who’s going to take your place and marry Myuran in the future. Then of course, Myuran’s daughter will be my daughter!”

“Grucius, you bastard, give it a rest! How many times do I have to tell you that your assumptions are wrong?!”

Hm, that’s right.

Youm is crazy, but that shitty wolf—Grucius is crazy too.

I know Meme is cute, but I don’t know what kind of thinking he must have to claim her as his own daughter.

“Well, I can understand Youm’s feelings...”

“Right? Look, Grucius! I knew the boss would understand!”

No matter how busy he is, he worries that if he doesn’t take care of Meme in his spare time, he won’t be remembered as a father.

He said that he is making a tearful effort not to let Grucius beat him to it.

Well, in this day and age, it's not a good idea to obsess over things. Even if it's a stupid story, if it makes you feel better, it's welcome.

However—

“Don't say stupid things and get yourself flagged for death, okay?”

I said so and gave Youm and the others a list of death flags.

We held the meeting in the Kingdom of Farmus's capitol building.

Since I had a general idea of the flow of the meeting, the explanation went smoothly.

The only thing I expected Youm and the others to do was to guide the people of Farmenas to evacuate, not to fight. Since the ‘magic transfer circle’ I installed cannot evacuate a large number of people, we needed to decide who would use it beforehand. I asked them to coordinate it well so that there wouldn't be any conflicts.

However, the destination was not necessarily safe, so the purpose of the transfer was different. Rather than the evacuation of important people, we were more concerned with the dispatch of troops.

If the Kingdom of Farmenas became a battlefield, the newly established Knights would respond to the situation. It seems that Grucius has been training the knights from the new recruits, including the old Farmus knights, but they are not enough to fight.

Therefore, arrangements were made to send reinforcements from other countries.

It would have been easy if we had placed them from the beginning, but since we did not know where the enemy would aim, we needed to be able to move them in any way.

After considering the importance, it was decided that the Kingdom of Farmenas would be postponed.

Even if this kingdom is lost, it can be rebuilt. As long as the human casualties were kept to a minimum, there was no need to force the war.

It was difficult for me to tell Youm and the others this, but I explained it to them and they agreed. Naturally, I promised to support them as much as possible by carrying out reconstruction projects in the worst case.

This kind of ‘laying the groundwork’ was important in order to make effective use of our limited forces.

“I know. It's not like the boss has abandoned us.”

“That said, there are only about fifty people who can go at a time with the ‘magic transfer circle.’ It's not a reassuring number at all.”

“Still...Normally, we're supposed to protect our country on our own. And since you've been so considerate, I don't want anything more!”

His words weren't directed at me, but at the ministers who seemed to want to complain.

I can understand the unvoiced arguments of the ministers, that they wanted us to help, that they didn't want to sacrifice their people, and that they wanted us to send more forces, but unfortunately we can't afford it either.

Well, I guess they understood that, and that's why they grudgingly agreed with us. Anyway, the business with the Kingdom of Farmenas was completed successfully.



After that, I went around to various places with Youm's guidance.

The main attraction was the construction site where important facilities were being built.

The Kingdom of Farmenas was the original royal capital of Farmus, so the central part of the city, within the city walls, was a noble town. As you moved closer to the outer perimeter of the city, the population became poorer, and the free people were forced out of the city walls.

Land readjustment was being carried out to make major renovations, but in the process, the streets running through the center of the city were dug up and underground passages were built.

The plan was to have the subway run from the station building adjacent to the royal capital.  
“That’s a bold move.”

“Myuran is amazing. She used her magic to investigate the strength of the ground and came up with a plan.”

Really, magic is such a cheat.

Geological surveillance is very complicated, but it's so easy for a skilled wizard to find out.

You can easily find out the location of underground water veins, the existence of cavities, the brittleness of the ground, and the quality of the ground.

Moreover, if you are good enough, you can even modify the soil. Soil-based magic can change the properties of soil, sand, soft rock, and hard rock.

Long live magic.

No wonder science and technology have not developed.

On the contrary, the empires that focus on technology and the vampires who are treated as freaks are the ones that are unusual in this world. However, I think we should not make fun of them because they are the ones who make useful discoveries.

“That’s an idea I never had. I thought shield engineering was useless in this world, but I guess magic can help.”

“Well, I don’t know what the shield thing is, but you’re not losing, are you?”

“It’s a technique for reinforcing an underground excavation so that the surface doesn’t collapse. It takes a lot of machinery, but a good mage can do it, or maybe even beat it.”

I remembered mentioning once that it would be nice if we could run trains underground. I can only admire the fact that Myuran, who remembered it, has made it happen.

I heard that Razen also cooperated, and it can be said that a construction method unique to another world has been completed.

In terms of cost, this method is definitely much more advantageous.

Well, this is not a matter of winning or losing. I felt that we could bring about a revolution by introducing the idea of technology into magic.

“Well, now I’m trying to suspend the construction and use the underpass as an evacuation site. We’ve reinforced the ceiling with magic, so it can withstand a big magic explosion in the city.”

“It depends on the scale of destruction, but I think it’s a good bomb shelter. If you stock up on water and food, you can stay there for quite a while.”

“It seems that water can be managed by magic. That’s why I’m having them only carry food. I’ve also dug a bunch of side holes for places to sleep and a big hole under the room with the door. You can use it as an outhouse.”

The room we were led to was indeed a toilet. The room was divided into many private rooms and could be used by about a hundred people at the same time. The shape of the toilet was Western style, and it was dropped down like a bottom<sup>35</sup> toilet.

“But won’t the smell be bad in the underground space?”

“Do you think so? But underneath this toilet, there are pieces of wood and other materials that help eliminate the smell.”

Oh, maybe it’s like a bio-toilet?

I don’t know much about them, but the activated microorganisms break down the solids into water and carbon dioxide, and the water evaporates, right?

«That’s pretty much correct. I’ve confirmed that the mechanism is working correctly, so there should be no problem with foul odor.»

Oh, great.

I heard that there are about five toilets.

It seemed that they could manage even if the siege lasted long.

Since there is a place to escape, we could send people who specialize in setting up ‘defensive barriers.’ That way, they could prepare for a long war.

I had heard that there was an underground passage that led to this one from the basement of the royal castle, so they were well prepared. I was relieved and excited by the technology of this world.

“We’ve got city defense barriers in place, and we’ve got evacuation drills going on. As soon as we spot an enemy, we can escape immediately.”

“That’s why the ministers didn’t make any unreasonable demands.”

“Yeah, that’s why. Besides, I won’t tolerate anyone who says anything stupid. I told them to quit their jobs and get out of the castle if they just want to whine.”

Anyone can complain. What’s important is a positive opinion.

Youm laughed when I said that.

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<sup>35</sup>A bottom toilet is an old style of Japanese toilet. Example: <https://3dmd.com/en/3d-model/Japanese-Old-Toilet-Bottom-Type-C/4563565/>

Looking back on the time when we first met, he has grown tremendously.

I was secretly reminded of the fact that we all grow up when the need arises.

After going back to the surface from the basement, I next headed for the training grounds.

I was also allowed to see the strength of the new Kingdom of Farmenas Knights trained by Grucius.

There were 500 knights of B rank and above, and 3,000 knights of C rank and below.

If they gathered all of the knights from all over Farmenas, there would be more than 40,000 knights. However, there was no point in gathering such a large number at this time, so they were giving priority to maintaining security.

“Well. If a huge army of angels attacked, there would be nothing we could do on the ground.”

“Yeah. I heard there was anti-aircraft magic, but there aren’t many magicians. Rommel concluded that it would be better to focus on defending the city with legion magic.”

“Razen-san agreed, so we’re training according to that policy. In other words, the Knight Order’s mission is to free the people from those who come down to the earth.”

Youm and Grucius explained to me.

I was relieved to see that they weren’t too eager to take on the enemy.

“I was a little worried that you might be thinking about doing something reckless.”

“Hahaha, I’m more timid than Phobio-sama. I know what I’m capable of, so I won’t be reckless. Well, since Razen-san trained me, I think I’m stronger than before. And just recently, my strength has suddenly increased. I’m going to be a shield for everyone, to the extent that I won’t be ashamed to be a leader.”

Grucius replied.

It’s not that he’s a coward, but that he possesses a quality that is essential for a commander—calm judgment. Grucius had a calculating side, so he didn’t seem likely to misjudge the difference in strength between him and the enemy.

There was also a curious comment about his “sudden increase in strength.”

Indeed, the amount of magicule in Grucius now seems to be comparable to that of the previous Beastketeers, so it seems to be equivalent to Special A rank. If his skill (level) was added on top of this, he must have grown to be a very strong asset.

The reason for this is, without a doubt, the effect of Karion’s awakening.

Even though he became like a brother to Youm, he did not forget his respect for Karion. This was also a sign that Karion felt a strong bond with Grucius, his subordinate.

“That’s because Karion has awakened and evolved. It must have affected you, too.”

“Karion-sama did?!”

“Yeah. So don’t ever waste that power.”

“Of course, I understand!”

“This feels like a lecture. It’s not my place to tell you that.”

“Hahaha, not at all. I’m glad to know why, and since His Majesty Rimuru is someone

Karion-sama approves of, I'm grateful."

I'm glad he doesn't think I'm meddling in his affairs.

"I hope so. By the way, so Grucius is also being trained by Razen?"

Razen is the one who trained Grucius. I seem to remember him being the one who made ramen noodles, but I guess he must have been a wizard.

How can Razen be a match for Grucius?

"Oh, Razen-san is a jack-of-all-trades. His knowledge of magic rivals Myuran's—"

"Hey, don't address my wife that way<sup>36</sup>!"

"Shut up, she's eventually gonna be my—"

"Don't fuck with me, you bastard!"

"Yes, yes, that's enough fighting. So?"

I was tired of seeing them bicker on a comical level, so I asked them to move on.

To summarize Grucius' story, when Razen took the body of the otherworlder (Shogo), he took his power as well. Of course, he did not take away the skill level of the otherworlder, but Razen, who had gone through a certain amount of training, was a first-rate fencer as well as a wizard.

As such, he was good at striking and kicking, which he passed on to Grucius.

"I didn't understand what he meant at first when he told me not to only fight with my natural physical abilities."

Grucius laughed.

"Yeah, well. Sare has more strength than Razen, but he loses in arm wrestling. He's no match for him in a real fight, and I've been impressed with him since he made his name in the Western Nations as the majin Razen."

"It's no wonder the Beastketeers were so cautious. But—"

That's when Grucius stopped talking and looked at me.

Then he shook his head.

"I understand, Grucius."

With that, Youm patted Grucius on the shoulder and looked at me.

While I was wondering what the hell was going on, they both looked at each other and sighed deeply.

"I'm just saying that there's always someone better, boss."

"Oh, yeah. That Razen-san was being played like a baby in front of Gadra-dono. I was stunned when I saw that."

Oh, so that's the story...

Well, Diablo had also said that Razen was "a small thing that doesn't matter," and we had a lot of people like that.

Gadra is certainly strong.

There is no doubt about it, but I feel that he's still at a mid-tier level in our country.

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<sup>36</sup>Grucius calls Myuran with no honorifics which is something that people only do when they are very close.

He seems to have evolved in a strange way after becoming a member of Diablo's faction, so his current rank may have changed, but he still doesn't seem to be within the top ranks.

Talking about this, I wondered what Gadra was doing now.

"So, I don't see Razen or Gadra around, are they doing something somewhere?" Youm replied with a wry smile.

"Training, they're training. They participated in the meeting to pick up the boss and to discuss future developments, but other than that, they've been fighting all this time."

"Seriously?"

"For real!"

Grucius nodded, so he must be telling the truth.

I thought Gadra was the intellectual type, but I didn't know he liked to fight so much.

Did Diablo have a bad influence on him?

Such fears began flashing through my mind, but I quickly dismissed them.

"If you're curious, I'll show you around."

I took Youm at his word and decided to visit Gadra and the others.



The destination was a plain about an hour's ride away by carriage.

There was a simple hut, similar to a guest house, that stood there. There was nothing else, just wasteland as far as the eye could see.

According to Youm, there were only four people living there.

Needless to say, the four were Razen, the best of the Kingdom of Farmenas, Sare and Grigori, formerly of the Three Martial Sages, and Gadra.

It was a very interesting combination, but when we arrived, they had all lined up to greet us.

It was strange to see Gadra leading the way, acting like a representative.

"We are very pleased that you have come to such a place!"

At Gadra's signal, the three remaining members of the group bowed their heads.

Not to Youm, but to me.

"Hey, hey, I'm here, too, aren't I?"

"Your Majesty, Sare and Grigori are guests of Farmenas, but it is not you they are loyal to. Therefore, they are paying their respects to His Majesty Rimuru, the Lord of Gadra-sama, by their own will."

"I get it. You don't even have to say anything, you're always lecturing me."

Razen rebuked Youm's complaining, but their relationship was more familiar than I had expected.

Razen's true intentions are unknown, but his position is that of a loyal vassal of Farmenas. I had thought that he held no loyalty to Youm, but judging from his attitude, it seemed that he cared for him in his own way.

However, aside from Gadra and Razen, I don't remember being respected by Sare and Grigori...

"Anyway, if they're doing this of their own will, why me?"

I was curious, so I asked.

Youm seemed to be curious, as if he had never heard of it.

If they wanted to move to my country, I could consider accepting them. Hinata didn't seem to have any intention of seeking out Sare and the others as traitors and executing them.

"There's a clear reason. Master Razen taught us about our inexperience, and Master Gadra taught us about the greatness of His Majesty Rimuru. We were so impressed that we wished to be included at the bottom of your ranks!"

Master?!

"That's right. Well, Gadra-sama's strength was unimaginable, but from what I heard he's not even close to His Majesty Rimuru. No! Even before that! I've heard that His Majesty Rimuru has a lot of powerful people under his command that even Gadra-sama cannot match, and we want to test our strength—"

Ranga jumped out from behind me while Grigori was making his speech.

"Well said! You are Grigori, I knew you'd be a sight to behold! If it's all right with you, then I'll give you a test of strength!!"

"Ge-gyaaah!! That dog guy from back then?!"

"Huh?"

"Ah, no...Ranga-dono, wasn't it?"

Grigori is shaking and sweating profusely. He had been badly beaten by Ranga before—he had been traumatized since then?

No, it can't be.

"If that's the case, why don't you let Ranga deal with him?"

"Eh?!"

"My lord, it would be my pleasure!"

"No, I..."

"Come, Grigori. Let us get out of the way so that my lords are not disturbed."

"Ah, hold on?!"

Ranga grabbed Grigori's head in his mouth and ran happily away. I couldn't see Grigori's face, but I'm sure he was happy that his wish came true.

I saw him and Ranga off with warm eyes.

It wasn't just me, but all the people present as well.

"Oh, I'd like to test my skills too, but I'm still inexperienced, so I'd like to start from the bottom..."

Sare said awkwardly.

“That’s true. Ranga is my bodyguard, so he’s one of the best. I thought Grigori-san was a challenger.”

“Of course! He’s got a phobia of dogs since he lost to Ranga-dono. I think he wanted to overcome it.”

Hearing Sare’s comment, Razen was holding his head in disgust. Youm and Gadra were chatting amicably beside him.

“Even I am not a match for Ranga-dono...What a fool he is.”

“I see, that sure is some rough treatment. That’s amazing, I don’t think I’d ever be able to do that.”

“Don’t do it. Your Majesty is a king. You don’t need to be strong.”

“I’ve always wanted to be strong, but I know my own strength. Once you get to know Boss Rimuru, it’s obvious that a little strength is useless.”

“It’s not useless. Even in the worst case, if we stay alive, we might be able to help in time.”

“Right. Well, I’ll do what I can to protect the ones I love.”

“I think that’s a good idea.”

Youm seems to be becoming more aware of his role as king.

I can’t lose, either.

I don’t intend to be as crazy as Grigori, but I am determined to do what I can, step by step. Razen also seems to approve of Youm now.

“As long as Your Majesty Youm serves this country, I will do my best to help you. Well, Her Royal Highness Princess Meme is the one I am going to make my apprentice, as I promised Queen Myuran, so I’ll protect her before anyone else.”

What a thing to say.

However, Youm should be relieved to know that he has someone who has supported the Kingdom of Farmus for hundreds of years.

As for me, I was thinking of something else. I was puzzled by the fact that Razen spoke in an old man’s manner despite his youthful appearance.

In the meantime, Ranga returned with a limp Grigori in his mouth.

“My lord, after a little play time, this person has stopped working!”

Too much!

“You’re not Shion, so can’t you take it easy on him?”

I scolded him severely.

And when I diagnosed Grigori, it turned out that he had just fainted.

“He’s that guy, isn’t he? Why did suddenly nominate Ranga?”

Well, I understand the desire for revenge, but I also think one should know where they stand...

“No, Boss, I don’t think that was it.”

“Eh?”

“Rather, he said he never wanted to fight, never wanted to see him again...”

“Seriously?”

Youm and Sare pointed this out, but perhaps I was the one misunderstanding? Sare said something different from what he said before.

So maybe he wasn’t happy to see Ranga again and just wanted to escape.

“No, I don’t think that’s the case. He was brave. He was unyielding, even against a man he’d already been defeated by. I was, you know, impressed with him. That’s why I allowed him to fight Ranga. Right, Ranga?”

Admitting a mistake is a liability.

Fortunately, Grigori was safe, so I decided to play it cool.

And on top of that, Ranga played nicely into it.

“You’re right! I was so overwhelmed by this man’s spirit that I overdid it!”

No, he’s really good.

He’s brilliantly correcting his mistakes.

I don’t know who he’s taken after, but I think Ranga has become cunning.

But it seems that our teamwork has convinced Youm and the others.

“It’s exactly as Rimuru-sama says. Isn’t that right, you guys?”

“Oh, yes. If that’s what the Boss says, then I guess that’s what it is.”

“I’m particularly dissatisfied. Sare, wasn’t it your misunderstanding?”

“That’s right! Well, Grigori sure has become a gutsy man...”

Yes, yes.

There is no problem.

“You’re right. Now that I have a little respect for you, I’ll call you Grigori ‘-san’ from now on!”

So that’s what happened...When Grigori himself woke up, he politely declined my offer.



Thus, all my business in the Kingdom of Farmenas was finished.

Youm and I discussed the matter and agreed that Sare and Grigori would be accepted and trained in our country.

I was concerned that their forces would be reduced, but they should be able to handle it since Gadra was still there. They also have Razen, and unless there is a major invasion by the enemy, they should be able to buy some time.

However, if such a situation had occurred, even with Sare and Grigori, it would have been a drop in the bucket. That’s why I chose to develop my skills in preparation for an emergency, rather than worrying about such an eventuality.

Incidentally, the power ratio of Razen and the others was very interesting.

If we simply compare the approximate amount of magicules, the order is Sare, Razen, Grigori, and Grucius (from highest to lowest).

Youm, I'm sorry to say, is out of the question. With Hakurou's hellish training and the performance of his equipment, he is barely in the A rank. We couldn't hope to increase his strength in the short term.

Grucius was an elite of the Beast King's Warriors. Thanks to the gift from Karion's awakening, he has grown to the level of Grigori, one of the former 'Three Martial Sages.'

However, it was a problem for the Knight Commander to leave his home country, and he did not want to, so I did not bring him back. He said he would come to visit us after all the problems were settled.

The first person who came to our country was Grigori.

He is a strong man with the special ability of 'immobility.' He prefers to use a battle ax spear (halberd), but he is also good at hand-to-hand combat.

Although he was defeated by Ranga, he was a "Sage Class" comparable to a Demon Lord Seed and had an existence value of about 400,000.

He was much stronger than I expected, so there is a possibility that he might turn into one.

The second person who came to our country was Sare.

He used to be the first knight of the Imperial Guards, but he was defeated by Hinata and gave up his position. Then he challenged Diablo as one of the "Three Martial Sages" and has been here ever since.

Well, it was simply the wrong opponent.

It seems that like Grigori, Sare was a man without luck.

However, his ability is real.

The value of Sare's existence that had led to Saint had surprisingly reached a million. It would certainly be interesting to have him challenge the labyrinth in the form of a real battle.

By the way, Razen only had a few more magicules than Grigori, but his ability was greater than Sare's.

When he took Shogo Taguchi's body, he gained the Unique Skills 'Berserker' and 'Survivor.'

According to Ciel-san, there are cases where Unique Skill is rooted in the mind, cases where it is engraved in the soul, and cases where it resides in the astral body, spiritual body, or material body.

There is also the power to steal Skill from enemies, but it seems that this is only possible if it is in the body. As an exception, it seems that there are Skills that reside in the soul, and in such cases, they can be taken away.

In other words, is it harder to take something that's engraved in your soul?

«It is not absolute. But if it is rooted in the heart, it is impossible.»

She explained confidently.

However, it seems that it can still be copied without being taken, so it is possible to commit foul acts like with Michael...

I digress, but that's why Razen, who had acquired two Unique Skills, was said to be more proficient in using them than Shogo.

And so, he overwhelmed Sare, who had about twice his magicle count.

However, it seems that this was only the beginning.

Sare had a Unique Skill called 'The All-Knowing One,' which allowed him to recognize and master his opponent's Art just by seeing it once. When Razen learned of this, he taught Sare all of the skills and magic he knew.

Magic is both an art and a skill that comes from knowledge. It was not easy to learn, but Sare did not complain and asked Razen to teach him.

That is the reason why Sare called Razen his master.

That is why Sare is now stronger than Razen in both name and reality.

Even so, Gadra seems to have beaten him to the punch.

The comparison of existence values is—

«Disclosing information about Gadra.»

**Name:** Gadra [EP: 1,126,666]

**Race:** greater chaos spirit, metal demon

**Blessing:** Black Primordial Noir

**Title:** Servant No.2 "Pochi<sup>37</sup>"

**Magic:** dark magic, elemental magic

**Skill:** Ultimate Gift 'Grimoire'

**Resistance:** Physical Attack Nullification, Abnormal Condition Nullification, Mental Attack Nullification, Natural Effects Nullification, Holy-Demonic Attack Resistance

I've found a lot of things to complain about, but I'm too tired to talk about them, so I'll leave it at that. For now, I'll discuss the comparison with Sare, but it looks like Gadra outperforms him by EP alone.

To be honest, I didn't expect him to be this strong.

Gadra wasn't that strong before he was reborn.

His knowledge of magic was outstanding, and his skill-level was remarkable, but he was not a threat if we judged him only in terms of combat.

He was cunning and troublesome. If he was going to be an adversary, he should be the first to go for. That was my true evaluation.

With that in mind, Gadra did the right thing.

He's still alive, and he's in my direct line of command. And he's even surpassed Saint Sare in direct combat ability.

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<sup>37</sup>Pochi is a generic Japanese name for a dog (kind of like Fido). His title is basically calling him a little errand dog.

Sare's 'Omnipotent One' is also troublesome, but it's surprisingly easy to deal with. All you have to do is to challenge it in a straightforward manner.

You can overwhelm it with physics, without the use of art or magic. Even if you do use them, you should do so in a timely manner to avoid being imitated.

It is said that Sare was defeated by Hinata, but I can guess the reason.

Hinata would never be careless, so she must have fought without exposing her cards to Sare. In that case, he would have lost the advantage of the Unique Skill, because he had nothing to learn.

And this time...

The decisive difference in Gadra's case must have been the presence or absence of the Ultimate Gift.

Gadra was cunning, so he might not have shown Sare his hidden tricks. But even if he had, Sare would not have been able to imitate it.

Because the unique level cannot compete with the ultimate level.

With that in mind, I realized once again that being able to give an Ultimate Gift to a subordinate like me must be quite the foul move.

Incidentally, the power of the Ultimate Gift 'Grimoire' was very similar to that of Adalmann's 'Necronomicon.' This included 'Thought Acceleration,' 'Universal Perception,' 'Demon Lord Haki,' 'Chant Cancellation,' 'Analyze and Assess,' 'All of Creation,' 'Mental Crush,' 'Knowledge Browsing,' and 'Concept Sharing.' 'Knowledge Browsing' seems to be an ability to learn from Ciel-san. And 'Concept Sharing' seems to be the right to share with Adalmann.

Well, like Ciel-san, it seemed to be a skill that embodied Gadra's desires.

Anyway, I understand why Gadra is stronger than Sare.

I also now have a rough idea of how powerful Sare is.

As I recall, the Holy Knight Order had been working hard to conquer the labyrinth, but was their current ranking at Apito's level?

That was before Adalmann's evolution, so it's not very useful...

I heard that they came to visit us recently, and that he had collected some data. Arnaud and Renard were extremely strong, with existence values of nearly 500,000. The remaining captains were also around 300,000 each and seemed to have grown significantly compared to their initial levels.

Since they were in the same level range as Grigori, it would be interesting to have them form a party.

Sare, on the other hand, had the advantage of learning the Arts easily, so it might be better to leave it to Hakuro.

He could be a good training partner for the children, and I thought he could also learn a lot in our country.

Of course, that should be kept confidential.

And so, the training plan for Sare and Grigori was decided.



For the time being, I decided to let Sare and Grigori familiarize themselves with the labyrinth.

Benimaru had been informed of the training plan and would be sent to his own place when the time was right.

“Will I be taking care of them again?”

“I’m counting on you. It’s sudden with Hakuro, so there might be some confusion, right?”

“Well, that’s true. But we’re all in the same situation, and I think you’re being too overprotective.”

Benimaru chuckled.

You may have a point, but they are our guests.

If they had immigrated to our country, I would not have allowed them to be too unreasonable.

More importantly, speaking of training.

“So, what’s the status of Karion and the others?”

“Huh, things are getting interesting over there.”

As soon as Benimaru said that, Ciel-san disclosed the information.

**Name:** Karion [EP: 2,773,537]

**Race:** Divine Beast. Greater chaos spirit, light spirit beast

**Name:** Frey [EP: 1,948,734]

**Race:** Divine Bird. Greater chaos spirit, sky spirit bird

The Labyrinth, it’s dangerous. All of the existence values and personal information is completely visible.

Karion and Frey-san had evolved and took on a divine nature. Frey-san’s existence value is less than 2 million, but she seems to have met the requirements for divinity. I guess it is within the margin of error.

Their skills and resistances are unknown, but there is no way to know that unless they tell me.

Even so, both of these people have awakened to become True Demon Lords, and are undisputedly strong.

In my case, the amount of magicules had increased tenfold, but Karion and Frey-san didn’t seem to have increased by that much.

Or rather, there seem to be individual differences.

My impression is that Karion’s pre-evolutionary value was around 700,000, and Frey-san’s

was less than 400,000.

Assuming that I'm right, Karion's strength has increased fourfold and Frey-san's strength has increased fivefold.

Well, in my case, it's because the original values were low, wasn't it?

If you think about it, it's natural.

We should consider not how many times the original value has increased, but rather how much it has increased.

It was not wrong to say that the greater the existence value, the greater the power when awakened.

Now, let's analyze their strength based on this information.

Karion's physical abilities nearly tripled when he transformed, but I don't think they doubled if we converted them into existence values.

I was thinking that it was probably just an ability boost for a certain amount of time. That's why I believed that shapeshifting was not completely foolproof.

Because if you transformed, you would become weaker after the time limit.

This is true not only for Karion, but also for Gabil and the others. Otherwise, the best idea would be to maintain the transformed state at all times.

However, there were still many advantages to transforming, such as the healing of all wounds and the full recovery of physical strength. These are characteristics unique to beast-men, so I don't mean to make fun of them. In short, it depends on how you use it.

So, in the case of the evolved Karion, how well is he able to use his power?

"What's he like now?"

"Yes. First up was Karion-dono, who I took on first for revenge."

"What?"

"You know, I led a team to Eurazania once. I was no match for him then. That's why I wanted to see how strong I had become now, and to test myself against Karion-dono, who had awakened."

Um, I think you've got it backwards.

I was planning to have Karion and the others test their strength to the fullest...

I wondered why Benimaru was testing his own strength, but after thinking about it, I didn't see the problem.

Benimaru got serious, and Karion gave it his all. In the environment of the labyrinth, where no one dies, this seemed to be a very interesting combination.

I'm sure Ramiris and the others were recording it, so I'll watch it later. With that, I decided to ask about the result first.

"Who won?"

"By a narrow margin, me."

"Oh, that's good!"

While I admired him, I was actually slightly troubled by the reaction.

For some reason, I realized that I hadn't doubted Benimaru's victory, and I was upset when

I heard that it was a close call.

“But it was a close call. How did that happen?”

At any rate, I asked him.

Before Benimaru could reply, an image appeared in my mind.

«It seems that Karion made the first move.»

As expected of Ciel-san.

It looks like she got the information right away.

And as Ciel-san explained, it was Karion who moved first in the video.

At the moment he raised his weapon and sank in a flowing manner, Karion’s entire body turned into light.

It was not a metaphor, but a real particle that attacked Benimaru.

«Karion named it ‘Burst Roar.’ It is an illusionary diffusion-focused particle cannon that can transform his own body into willful particles that pierces the enemy.»

So, it has a will then.

It means that Karion had also awakened and acquired the characteristics of a spiritual life form. It was also understandable that the light that had followed Benimaru swallowed him up.

“The moment the game started, I got chills, or rather, I sensed that it was going to be dangerous. So, I decided that this was not the time to wait and see, and activated my ‘Heat Haze<sup>38</sup>...’”

Benimaru’s ‘Heat Haze’ is a power that can be called the ultimate secret of ‘Formhide.’ It prevents any attack from catching you, so it will only work if you have the Ultimate Skill on top of it.

However, if that had not been activated, Benimaru would have lost in the first move.

After all, Karion embodied a speed several hundred times faster than the speed of sound, comparable to that of Velgrynd’s super speed attack.

Benimaru’s evasion of the attack was amazing, but there was nothing he could do if he had been tracked from there. It was because of his Ultimate Skill ‘Heat King Amaterasu’ that he was able to withstand this.

“Your intuition and your Ultimate Skill were the difference between victory and defeat.”

“Yes, it was a close call. I was so proud of myself that I thought I could win more easily, so it was a good reminder for me.”

“That’s right. I didn’t doubt you’d win, so I had mixed feelings about it. After all, carelessness and pride can lead to defeat. It’s hard to be aware of, so I’m grateful you realized this before the showdown.”

“Yes. Even if I’m aware of it, I can be unconsciously proud of it. That’s why it’s called carelessness, but it can be scary.”

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<sup>38</sup>Kagerō (陽炎) = Heat Haze. They also called it ‘Yōen.’ So feel free to refer to this as ‘Kagerō,’ or ‘Yōen, as well. I’m here getting One Piece vibes...

“Exactly.”

We were grateful to Karion for reminding us of our lack of awareness.



After reflecting with Benimaru, I relaxed with a café au lait brewed by Shuna and listened to the rest.

“Did you fight with Frey-san?”

“No, I think Frey-dono saw us fighting and decided she couldn’t win. She seems like the type who hates wasting time.”

“I see, so that’s how it is.”

I nodded my head, agreeing with Benimaru’s conclusion. Frey-san is not particularly beligerent, so I can understand her reaction.

Besides, I had heard Milim complaining about Frey-san’s meticulous nature. I’ve heard that she’s been having a lot of trouble with it, but it’s none of my business, so I’ll just ignore it.

“After that, it was a matter of trying to conquer the labyrinth to see how far they could go.”

“If you want to test your strength, that’s probably the quickest way.”

“Yes. Each one started at the fifty-first level, individually.”

As Benimaru explained, images began flooding my mind.

Ciel-san is a being of many talents.

First, Karion.

The power that affected Benimaru was serious, and he continued to make good progress.

The 60<sup>th</sup> level was cleared easily due to Gadra’s absence. Though at this rate, even if he had stayed, he would have been defeated. That’s how unstoppable Karion’s momentum was.

He also fought Adalmann and the others, who happened to be back to adjust the magic transfer circle, as a test of his skill.

As a result, he easily defeated them even though it was three against one.

That wasn’t surprising. He was using ‘Burst Roar’ liberally, so Adalmann and the others had no time to take countermeasures.

Wenti acted as the shield, Albert as the ranger, and Adalmann as the attacker. That combination fell apart when Wenti was first defeated.

Karion then went after the troublesome Adalmann, leaving Albert behind. The way he fought was reminiscent of a lion on the hunt.

«It is the female lion that does most of the hunting...»

I know that!!

Ciel-san’s explanation is very useful, but sometimes it makes me feel like a fool.

It's always been that way, even since the days of the 'Great Sage,' right?

«I'll be careful.»

*Really, please do,* I nodded, greatly offended.

So, back to the topic at hand.

Karion's 'Burst Roar' was incredibly powerful.

Adalmann had a light attribute, but Karion was also a light attribute. There was no difference between them, so it was just a matter of simple strength.

The interesting thing to notice here was that Adalmann has an Ultimate Gift.

Karion does not seem to have an Ultimate Skill, nor does he have mythical-grade equipment.

So, how was he able to beat Adalmann?

I seem to remember Ciel-san saying that the ultimate level can only be beaten by another ultimate power.

«I don't remember.»

Oh, is that so?

I feel like I've been deceived, but I'm not so sure either...

«Karion also possesses the characteristics of a spiritual life form, so his strength of will must have been able to rival the ultimate power.»

I see, that makes sense.

In other words, Karion has more offensive power than the 'Multilayer Barrier' reinforced by Adalmann's 'Necronomicon.'

"The next opponent to face Karion-dono was Kumara. Kumara wanted to fight first, so I gave her permission."

"Well, Zegion is stronger than Kumara, so maybe we should rethink the labyrinth floor guardian placements."

"Right. And as it turns out, it was a pretty good match."

Again, a video was shown.

Kumara hadn't shown her tailed beasts and was going all out from the start.

She had heard the news of Adalmann and the others' defeat, but seemed to be going into battle without listening to the details.

There is a big difference between knowing what the enemy is up to and not knowing. And yet, she dared to challenge the enemy on equal terms.

Karion was superior in existence value. However, Kumara had the Ultimate Gift 'Beast King Bahamut.'

Again, Karion made his first move with a Burst Roar. This time, there were several flashes of light, aiming at Kumara from all directions.

Kumara, on the other hand, flew to the sky and invoked 'Gravity Domination.' This caused

the light to bend due to the super gravity, and Karion's attack only pierced Kumara's leg.

This was not Kumara's intended evasion, but was just her luck. That's why she did not counterattack, but instead prioritized her own recovery.

Or is it possible to substitute with the legs of a tailed beast instead? The tailed beasts can be resurrected by Kumara's magicules, so it would be difficult to disable Kumara with an opponent of the same level.

And Karion, who failed in his first attack, had materialized. The particle state, which seemed to be invincible, still had a time limit.

And it looks like it cannot be fired repeatedly.

Karion did not chase Kumara, but instead kept his distance and set up a 'White Tiger-Blue Dragon Strike.<sup>39</sup>'

Kumara looked down at Karion from above.

Karion stared at her and considered his next move.

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<sup>39</sup>'Byakko Seiryugeki.'



Their gazes crossed, and in the next moment, a tremor ran through the air.

Kumara swooped down to attack Karion and unleashed a ‘Nine-Tailed Piercing Strike<sup>40</sup>.’ Karion responded by concentrating his magic power on the ‘White Tiger-Blue Dragon Strike and unleashed a Burst Roar.

It was Kumara who won the clash.

The particle cannon fizzled out, and Karion’s ‘White Tiger-Blue Dragon Strike’ shattered. “I will win!”

Kumara was proud of her victory and tried to finish Karion off.

But that was not to be.

“How naive.”

Karion’s muttered words came late, after Kumara’s heart had been destroyed.

Karion’s weapon was shattered, but not broken. The shards were controlled by Karion’s will and had become particles that pierced Kumara from behind.

The game was won.

Karion was not so naive as to let his guard down here. He mercilessly ended the game with a Burst Roar against Kumara, who had stopped moving.

“And so Karion-dono won—”

“Looks like it. I mean, Kumara has gotten so strong that it’s hard to believe she lost so easily.”

“Well, that’s how it goes in a fight. Fortunately, this wasn’t the real thing.”

“That’s true. Really, I think it was a good experience for Kumara.”

Such a display of Karion’s prowess made us all feel very remorseful about ourselves.

We’ve been too prideful.

“The idea of taking care of Karion-dono was very presumptuous. There were many things to teach, and I learned a lot from him.”

“Well, yes. Some people say that teaching others is like being given an opportunity to realize what you lack.”

I think he meant that if someone asks you something you don’t know, you should look it up immediately and use it to your advantage.

In this case, I felt that he learned how to fight more carefully by training with Karion in actual combat.

Karion seemed to be getting more and more sophisticated in his fighting style.

If Kumara had taken him on before Adalmann, the odds would have been more likely to be reversed. That was how well Karion had developed.

“Well, I guess Zegion was in danger, too.”

I couldn’t imagine Zegion being defeated, but at this rate—

“Oh, that was out of the question.”

“Eh?”

<sup>40</sup>•Kyuubi Senkougeki (九尾穿孔擊)

“Facing off, Karion-dono was the first to set up—”

The image played out.

The battle was instantaneous.

Before Karion could turn into particles—no, that’s wrong. Immediately after Zegion smiled at him as if he were an illusion, Karion’s entire body was cut into pieces.

“An instant kill. What is Zegion really?”

“To be honest, it’s almost a miracle that I was able to beat him. If I tried now, I don’t think I could win,” Benimaru chuckled.

He may have been modest, but if Benimaru, who hated to lose, was saying as much, then Zegion truly was exceptional.

If Zegion had been defeated here, it would have required a fundamental review of our defense system.

“Zegion doesn’t seem to be very prideful. We’ve reaffirmed our own lack of awareness, but that seems unnecessary for Zegion.”

“Agreed. He’s extremely stoic. It was the most complete victory he’s ever had, but he didn’t seem satisfied at all, saying ‘This isn’t even close to Rimuru-sama.’”

I wondered if Zegion was aiming for an imaginary me—I felt very far away.



Karion’s challenge was over.

So then, what about Frey-san?

“Frey-dono also defeated Adalmann and the others. Quite handily, at that.”

“Seriously?!”

Too unexpected.

I was expecting Adalmann and his team to win this game.

I had thought Frey-san would win in a one-on-one match, but that Adalmann and the others would have the advantage in a three-on-one match…

After watching the video, I understood why Frey-san won.

“Ah, they were too incompatible!”

“Yeah, that’s right. Frey-dono’s ‘Magic Interference’ blocked Adalmann’s magic. The reason for the defeat was that this disrupted his offensive pattern and allowed Frey-dono to control the pace.”

Benimaru’s explanation was correct.

A circle of fifty meters in radius around Frey-san had become an anti-magic area, blocking the movement of magicules. Because the interference wave was more powerful than that of the Charybdis, it had also blocked Adalmann’s ‘Necronomicon.’

By the way, Frey-san also had divinity.

Since divinity seems to be a trait that can only be acquired by a spiritual life form whose life span has expired, it was no surprise that Frey-san was able to compete with the Ultimate Gift.

On the contrary, there was a possibility that Frey-san might have acquired an Ultimate Skill.

At this point, Adalmann switched to Holy Magic: Holy Cannon as his main tool, but it was not a decisive move. The trouble was that Frey-san could fly, so she was able to evade it with a flick of her wrist.

She then closed in on Wenti, who was acting as a shield, and grabbed her with her claws.

“The trouble is Frey-dono’s claws. They disrupt the body’s magicules, so they are a monster’s natural enemy. Once they grab you, it’s like having all of your skills and magic blocked.”

Frey-san’s claws were definitely a mythical-grade level of danger.

“Wow, if I didn’t know better, I’d say I might have been in danger too.”

“Hahaha, you’re okay, right? In the case of Rimuru-sama, you can escape with ‘Clone.’ However, Karion-dono also said it was impossible to escape from, so I’d be in trouble too. I’d just beat her before she caught me, though.”

In Benimaru’s case, that was probably true.

But for Adalmann and the others, it was impossible.

Wenti was destroyed from the inside and left the battlefield. After that, Frey-san changed her strategy to a long-distance battle.

Since Adalmann and his team’s flight was blocked, they could only be attacked one-sidedly from above. Albert, impatient with this, leapt and aimed at Frey-san, but that was exactly what Frey-san wanted.

The title of “Sky Queen” was not lost upon Albert, and he too was scattered in the sky.

Thus, Adalmann was the only one left, but he had no chance to win. Sadly, he was forced to lose before Frey-san.

“Frey-dono also moved on to the next opponent, which was a battle against Kumara.”

“What was the result?”

“They were almost evenly matched in strength, but Kumara is not divine.”

Besides, judging from the way she just fought, Frey-san had quite a bit of combat experience. She had said herself that she was the weakest of the ten demon lords, but it seemed that she was being modest.

The cunning Frey-san and the inexperienced Kumara.

I thought it would be a good match, and I guess I was right.

“It was a great match. They fought for three whole days, and both of them gave it their all. I’d call it a draw, but the winner was Frey-dono.”

“Ah, that was a great battle. I’ll study the footage later.”

“Yes, I learned a lot. The indomitable spirit to never give up on victory is important, but in the end, it’s the intelligence that counts. When you have a strong opponent, it is important to mislead your opponent about your strength. The reason for Kumara’s defeat was that she

misjudged her opponent's remaining strength."

I'm looking forward to seeing the video.

It was three days' worth of information, so I'd watch it at several times the speed using Thought Acceleration.

"So, did Frey-san challenge Zegion?"

If she was on par with Kumara, she was bound to lose.

It seemed to me that Frey-san, who had avoided a fight with Benimaru, would not participate in a fight with an obvious outcome.

"She was fighting Apito, not Zegion."

"Eh, is that so?"

"Yes. After all, she must have had her pride as someone of flight."

"Oh, that's..."

She seemed reasonable, but she was surprisingly competitive.

"It was a good match, but Frey-dono won by a landslide."

That's about right.

If it was a good match, I should have congratulated Apito on her good performance.

Anyway, now I knew what Frey-san was capable of, and I could see what my friends had to work on.

It must have been a shock for Adalmann and his group, who had to suffer a series of defeats as soon as they came back to our country in the middle of their work, but I hope they would be grateful that this was not the real battle and use this experience in the future.

Also, I might have sold my debt to Karion and Frey-san. This was also thanks to Ramiris, so I'd tell them to thank her later.

I also thanked Ramiris once again.

Now, onto the real issue at hand.

"Then, I'll leave you in charge of Sare and the others."

"Yes, sir. Well, let's see if they can get past Adalmann and the others, shall we?"

"I agree with you. Maybe, Albert can handle it on his own. Just don't keep Adalmann and the others around forever!"

Having just vowed to not let my guard down, I wouldn't be surprised if this prediction was wrong. But Sare was no match for even Master Gadra.

It would be difficult for him to get past Adalmann and the others, I thought.

And then later.

That prediction proved to be correct. Sare and his team decided to train with Apito instead of Adalmann and his team who returned to their work.



After leaving Sare and the others with Benimaru, I headed for the Kingdom of Blumund, where Myourmiles was waiting for us.

The plan was to meet them there and have them accompany us to the Kingdom of Ingracia.

I had been to the Kingdom of Blumund many times before, so I was familiar with it. Since we were not going into the city, there was no need to go through the ‘Barrier.’ We went to the outskirts of the capital as if we were sightseeing.

It was also the center of a big project.

The World Station was currently under construction, and workers from neighboring countries had been gathering there. Not far from there, in a prime location, the headquarters of the Four Nations Trade Federation was being built.

Well, I’m pretty happy.

It was a ten-story skyscraper over 30 meters high, which was rare in this world.

While it was not as high as Milim’s new castle, it was still one of the tallest buildings in this world.

I had tried to elaborate on the design and used precious glass extravagantly. Of course, it was a tempered glass made of “maka,<sup>41</sup>” which was resistant to typhoons, earthquakes, and magical attacks.

I had many other hobbies and interests, so I was very attached to this building.

This was where we were meeting today, or rather, where we were planning to have a party to celebrate the new building. I was actually the owner of the building, but was treated as an invited guest.

And now, I had finally arrived in front of the building.

I would have liked to come and see the building when it was completed, but I had been so busy lately that I haven’t had time. So, I left all the arrangements for the building’s staff to Myourmiles.

It was hard work for me, but it must have been hard work for Myourmiles too. Without Myourmiles, I wouldn’t be able to see this day.

I knew that he was capable, but he also seemed to have a talent for charity.

The representative of the Four Nations Trade Federation is Myourmiles, but the head of this building was someone else. To my surprise, Veryard, who had recently been promoted to the rank of Viscount, was now Myourmiles’ subordinate. I was informed that he had been appointed

<sup>41</sup>Maka (マカ) or 魔化 could mean a variety of things that I’m not 100% sure of. ‘Ma’ can either mean devil/demon or magic depending on how you look at it. And the ‘Ka’ can mean ‘-ification’ or ‘reinforced’ or ‘made of,’ or a bunch of other things. Perhaps it’s a way of saying ‘Magic Made’ glass or something. Or it’s just a pun because Maka sounds like Micah.

as the general manager.

I am honestly happy and relieved that Veryard has become my ally. I haven't forgotten the skill with which he deceived me, and I hope to see more of him in the future.

I have heard that he has recruited several other talented people.

He said he would introduce them to me at the party today, and I was looking forward to it.

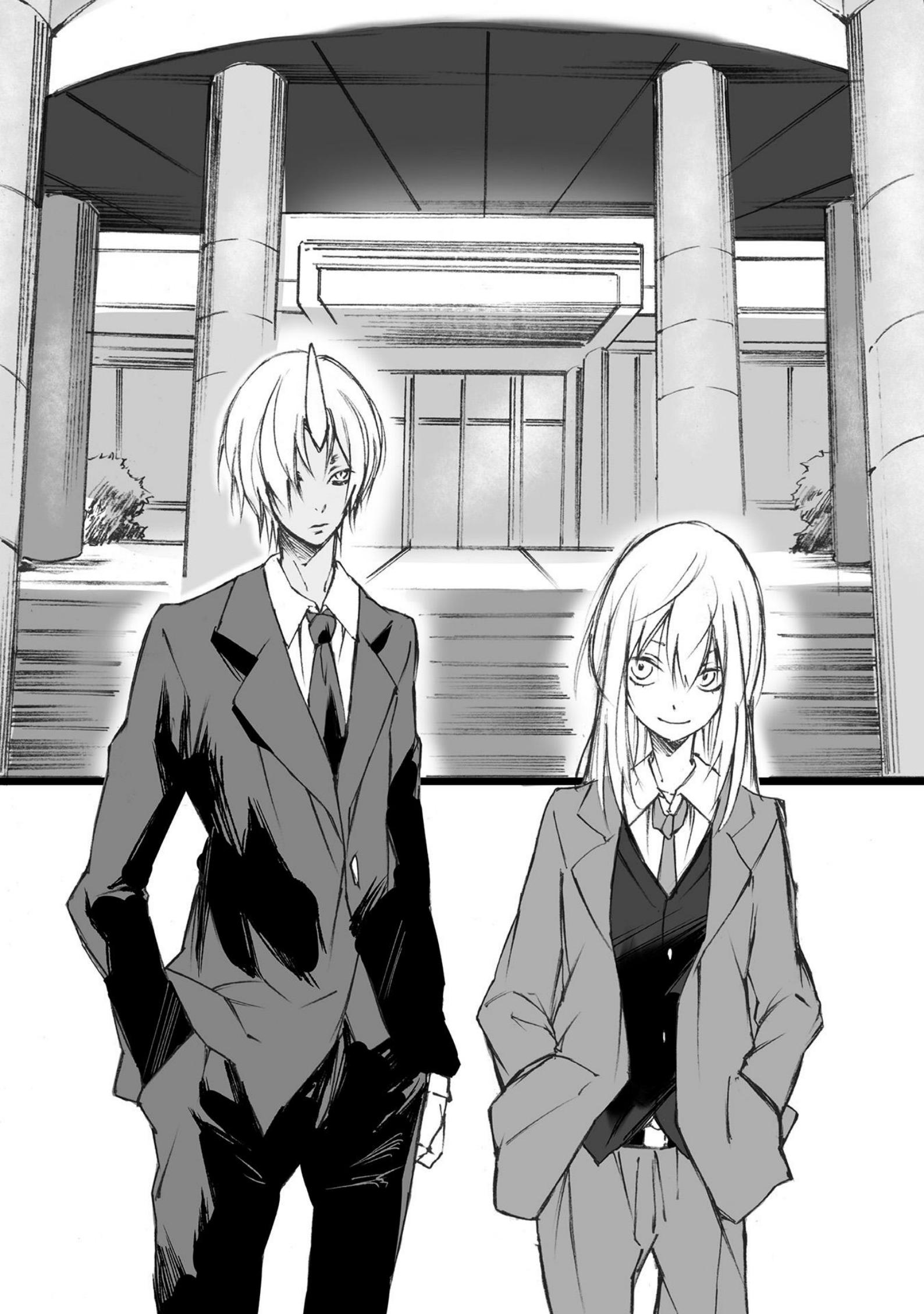
As usual, Souei and I stand side by side, with Ranga in the shadows.

We were dressed in formal suits today.

I was wearing a three-piece suit and Souei was wearing a two-piece suit.

The color of the suit was gray for me and black for Souei. It was one that Shuna had tailored for us, using the now-branded hellmoth thread.

Since it was custom-made and not sold in the market, anyone who saw it would have noticed the difference in quality.



The party wouldn't start until evening, so there were not many people.  
In spite of this, it was my charisma that attracted the attention of passers-by.  
"Look at that guy, he's so handsome!"  
"Is that his brother? He's like a big brother protecting his little brother."  
"The little brother is cute too, I can't wait to see what he becomes in the future!"  
"He's cool. There have been a lot of foreigners visiting these days, but it's still rare to see someone so cool."

...Hmm?

That's not the reaction I was expecting.  
I guess she was just interested in Souei, not my charisma.  
I realized that I was being too self-conscious and felt a little embarrassed.  
"Well, why don't we just go in and say hello first?"  
I said so, trying to cover up my embarrassment.

So, I went through the door to the reception desk. The first floor was a large floor like a hotel lobby, divided into a waiting area and a long room.

Since I already knew the inside of the building, I proceeded without hesitation.

"Is Myourmiles-kun here?"  
As I called out to the beautiful receptionist, a pompous man dressed in a fashionable suit with a cigar in his mouth came out of the back room and stared at me suspiciously.

"And just who are you?"  
"Ah, I'm Rimuru. Can you tell Myourmiles-kun that I'm here?"  
I said so with a smile, though I thought he was arrogant despite his gentlemanly appearance.  
The receptionist, hearing my name, quickly changed her complexion and reached for the crystal ball. It was also a magic tool that allowed you to communicate with another crystal ball. The disadvantage was that it could only be used at a short distance, but it was the best item for inside the building.

That response was just as I'd trained it to be, so I was content to watch...Suddenly, an important man stopped the receptionist.

"Um, Gabbana-sama, this person is—"  
"It's fine. I'll take care of this."  
"No, I mean—"  
"I am here. There are people who tell lies in order to meet Myourmiles-sama. There are also a lot of fools who try to attend parties they weren't invited to, and well, it's not easy being famous. He doesn't understand much about that, so he needs good subordinates like me. You were unlucky, too. If I hadn't been here, perhaps you would have succeeded."

"Haa, I see..."  
What else am I supposed to say here?  
The receptionist seemed to know my name, but this gentleman—Gabbana, didn't seem to know anything about me.

No, maybe he did know me, but the face and the name didn't match.

Judging from the situation, he didn't seem to be in charge of the reception.

I wondered if maybe he was just a dirty old man who wanted to look good in front of this beautiful receptionist.

“Rimuru-sama. I will educate this man myself.”

Souei, who had been quietly losing his temper, glared at Gabbana with steely eyes.

“Wait, wait, wait! Myourmiles-kun is training him, so let's not let a few misunderstandings get in the way!”

Let's just be kind here, okay?

In fact, Myourmiles had probably refrained from picking us up because he was busy, but it turned out to be a bad idea.

Gabbana's pompous attitude may be questionable, but with so many unannounced visitors, this kind of reaction might be inevitable.

As I was calming down the angry Souei, the receptionist shouted out.

“Gabbana-sama! This person is the real deal!! She looks exactly like the portrait on display in Myourmiles-sama's room, there's no doubt about it!!”

Eh, he has a portrait?

I had noticed that he had one when I visited his house, but I didn't know he still had it. Myourmiles surer was a strange man to display it so proudly.

Well, the original Shizu-san was a beautiful woman.

I can understand why one might be attracted to her, but my figure is that of an elementary school student—well, now that I think about it, I've grown up.

I was just under 160 centimeters, which is about the average height of a high school girl.

I don't have much of a chest, but I might be beautiful in a portrait.

However, I couldn't sit still, so I would have to ask Ciel-san to take over the inside.

—I have no intention of becoming a model for a painting, though.

As I was trapped in such an advanced level of thought, I heard Gabbana's astonished voice.

“Wh-What? You mean to tell me that this brat—I mean, this young master, is His Majesty Rimuru himself?”

“Yes, I'm sure.”

“No, no, isn't that crazy?! Isn't he a demon lord? A king who controls such a vast territory is walking around with only one bodyguard—just by using common sense there is no way, so how—?!”

Hmm, that's also true.

As Shuna said when we were on our way to Dwargon, we needed to behave in a way that was appropriate for our rank.

I skipped it because we didn't have much time at the time, but Shuna seemed to be unhappy about it. After all, I should probably be more careful in the future to avoid this kind of thing.

“I know that, but it's true!”

“But I mean, would a demon lord just drop by the reception desk and casually ask, ‘Is Myourmiles-kun here?’ You wouldn't, would you? Right?”

Gabbana makes his case with tears in his eyes.

If he admits this reality, he will be left with nothing but the fact that he tried to turn a demon lord away. In Gabbana's position, he would desperately want to deny it.

The gentleman's mask is off and he's showing his true colors... I'm starting to feel sorry for him.

"I'm sorry, okay? It's not like I'm gonna call my subordinates over now—"

"At your request, can I call in the stealth force?"

"No, I don't want that! So, I'll just say that Gabbana-san was not at fault this time, and I'll drop the matter. Can you get Myourmiles-kun on it?"

When I suggested this, Gabbana's face lit up.

"I-is that okay?"

"Wouldn't that make both of us happier?"

As soon as I said that, tears welled up in Gabbana's eyes.

I don't know how he misunderstood, but he looked at me with sparkling eyes and said, "Thank you very much! I will never forget this favor."

As for me, I felt a little uncomfortable, because I just wanted to cover up my mistakes as well.



While Gabbana was thanking me more than necessary, the receptionist called for Myourmiles.

With Gabbana and the receptionist bowing us off, we made our way to Myourmiles' office.

It was a spacious room on the top floor, with plenty of sunlight and a great view.

We sat down on the best sofas and enjoyed the view, while quenching our thirst with the juice that had been prepared for us.

"Rimuru-sama, did something happen?"

"No, nothing at all."

"Well, that's good, but perhaps Gabbana has done something rude—"

"No, no, it's okay!"

I calmed down the worried Myourmiles and casually changed the subject.

"More importantly, Myourmiles-kun. I heard that you have a portrait of me in your room. What does that mean?"

I asked, keeping my gaze fixed on a point on the wall and maintaining my composure.

"Gweh?! W-well, that's..."

"The painting seems to have been acquired on the black market. However, not only is the source unknown, but so is the identity of the artist."

"Eh?"

“There was one with the appearance of a slime, so it must be the work of someone who knows Rimuru-sama, but even our intelligence network can’t figure it out, so I guess they’re pretty good.”

Eh, wait a minute?

I mean, isn’t this pretty bad?

“So, you’re saying Souei couldn’t track him down even if he investigated?”

“I’m afraid so, yes.”

“No way...”

“Since it was during the war, we judged this case to be of low importance. That’s why we couldn’t arrange a large number of personnel.”

I see, that was one of the reasons.

But still, it’s weird to be used as a model for a painting by someone I don’t know.

“No, no, the reporters of other countries have seen Rimuru-sama. I’m sure some of them have a keen interest in keeping the paintings, so isn’t that strange?”

“Is that so...?”

It does bother me that even Souei and the others aren’t sure who it is.

Well, there’s no use thinking about it.

“Then, we’ll confiscate the painting.”

“Yes—E-Eh?!”

I tried to persuade Myourmiles, who was surprised and displeased.

Or rather, it was already decided.

“Why should I let you display my portrait? Absolutely not!”

“No-No way! That’s high-handed. I don’t even think any tyrant, ancient or modern, would do such a thing!!”

“You’re overreacting! I mean, why are you resisting so much? I’ll pay you for the painting, so this is confiscated.”

I said as such and collected the painting from the wall.

After all, the painting had been so beautified that I felt it was no longer me.

To put it simply, there was nothing but the image of Shizu-san.

Beauty and fragility were beautifully expressed.

“I was so excited about hanging Rimuru-sama’s picture here...”

Souei patted the lamenting Myourmiles on the shoulder.

“Huh, it can’t be helped. Then I’ll give this to Myourmiles-dono as well.”

“Eh?”

“W-well, that’s...” Myourmiles sputtered in surprise.

The moment we saw the picture, Myourmiles and I had delicate expressions on our faces.

It was a picture of a slime.

“Hmm...”

“Hey, good for you, Myourmiles-kun. Take a look at that and give it a try.”

“No, no, no, no, that’s not right, what can I say...”

Well, it is different.

I don't think seeing me in slime form will get you fired up even one millimeter.

"That said, why does Souei have something like that?"

"Yes. I confiscated it during our investigation. There were a few other items leaked as well, so we recovered them all."

"Just the slime portraits?"

"...Yes."

What's with the pause?

"No... Actually, Diablo took one from me..."

What the hell, that bastard!

"I desperately resisted, but I was unable to do anything. I apologize."

"I see, I understand. I'll make sure to take it back from Diablo and tell him not to bother you."

Diablo is a problem.

That bastard thinks too highly of me.

The problem is that I can't completely deny my appearance, because it comes from Shizusan. That is why I can't allow him to keep in his possession a picture that I don't even know whose work it is.

Souei smiled, as if he was relieved by my promise.

Myourmiles muttered, "No, but... Then Souei-dono will still keep the painting?" But that was probably an unnecessary worry.

"Souei is very popular, so you can rest assured, right?"

When I said that, Myourmiles nodded with a delicate expression.

We ended the conversation by agreeing to investigate the source of the paintings thoroughly.



With only a few hours left until nightfall, we got down to business.

"I'm glad to hear that your plans are going well, but what are your plans for the future?"

"That's the thing. I've been meaning to ask you about the current situation."

"Well, then shall I tell you?"

"No, I've been getting flooded with inquiries about that. I've invited you to the party today and we'll have a meeting tomorrow."

"Oh! Impressive, Myourmiles-kun. You've got it all planned out."

"Wahaha! Of course!"

We had been talking about the same thing over and over again and I was getting bored. Thanks to Myourmiles, we'd be able to do it all at once.

In that case, I'll just get a report from Myourmiles.

The plan was going well.

It seems that there was almost no one left to oppose REG as they took over underground organizations one by one.

They had also gained the trust of the public, and now there was no end to the number of noblemen from various countries who wanted to join.

"That's wonderful. You're doing so well it's almost scary."

"Indeed, it is. In fact, Veryard-dono's skill is so great that he's been expanding his influence in ways I never thought possible. Frankly, he's better than I am."

"Don't worry. I remember when Veryard-san took one over on me. No wonder Myourmiles-kun thinks he's lost."

"I hate to admit it, but he's a monster. I felt like he was reading my thoughts and leading me to wherever Veryard-dono wanted me to go. Perhaps he'd be a better representative than me, right?"

I don't know about that.

I'm sure he's an excellent man, but whether or not he should be at the top of the organization is a different story.

"I don't think so."

"...?"

"No, I'm not saying that because I'm good friends with Myourmiles-kun, but because it's actually the boss's job to appreciate the hard work of his subordinates. When you're too good, it's hard to properly appreciate the achievements of others."

"Hmm, I think I understand what Rimuru-sama is trying to say, but..."

Myourmiles was still unconvinced.

In that case, I'd repeat it here. I could have laughed it off, but I thought it would be better to allay these fears in the early stages.

"People have individual differences, and naturally, their abilities vary, don't they? That's why bosses are expected to assign tasks to their subordinates according to their abilities. On the other hand, people who can work on their own tend to finish everything on their own without relying on others."

"Huh..."

"So, when a person like that reaches the top, there's a pretty good chance he'll think he's the best and the right one."

It's what they call a one-man boss.

They are certainly excellent, but some of them take the extreme view that their subordinates should be able to do their jobs and that they are incompetent if they fail.

Even if the failure is caused by the boss who imposed an unreasonable workload on the subordinate, the boss who thinks he is right may blame the subordinate for the failure. It's even worse if it's the president.

There may be no one to point out the problem for fear of being fired, or even if there is,

they may not listen to you.

In this respect, I believed that Myourmiles would be fine.

Myourmiles may be a bit of a ‘one-man,’ but he is also humane and has the capacity to accept the failures of his subordinates as his own.

And in the case of Veryard, he is the type of person who discards incompetence.

No, I was exaggerating.

I don’t mean that he is cold-blooded or anything like that, but he is the type of person who only looks at the numbers and does not give preferential treatment to people who are unnecessary to the organization.

Such a top executive may contribute to the development of the organization, but that is not the kind of organization I am aiming for. I want the people who belong to the organization to experience the joy of being useful to others.

With the ‘Four Nations Trade Federation’ being set up so far, there is no need to rush to expand the organization. Even if it’s slow, I want this to become a trustworthy organization where one’s fellow members can rely on one another.

Rapid growth tends to create dropouts. That’s probably what would happen if Veryard took the top position.

I told Myourmiles, politely.

“...I see, so that was Rimuru-sama’s idea.”

“My fears may be unfounded. I don’t mean to say that Veryard-san is a bad person, but I think he tends to put efficiency first because he is capable.”

“Well, I can’t deny that. So, my role is to make it easier for the people under Veryard-dono to work, right?”

“You’re quick to guess. The top position can be a decoration. But it shouldn’t be empty. If you can be a portable shrine that everyone feels good about carrying, most things will work out!”

This is not absolutely correct, because it is a case-by-case basis. But in this case, I was convinced that Myourmiles was the right choice.

In the first place, Myourmiles was also the minister of finance in our country, so he should not work too hard as the representative of the “Four Nations Trade Federation.”

He should just reign at the top and assign tasks to his capable subordinates. And it seemed to me that Veryard was better suited to work for someone else than to be at the top himself.

Therefore, I gave my seal of approval to Myourmiles as a suitable representative, but upon hearing that, Myourmiles started laughing.

“Wahaha! As expected of Rimuru-sama, so very humble!”

“...?”

“...!!”

“You idiot! I’m not talking about me, I’m talking about you!!”

Even though I shouted, Myourmiles kept laughing for a while.



After listening to Myourmiles' report, it was time for the party to start.

"We have invited noblemen from all over the world today, so Rimuru-sama will be the center of attention. There will be so many guests that you won't have time to take a break, what do you think?"

Hmm, that's right...

"It's not good for me to be intimidating."

Needless to say, it was a bad idea, and I also didn't want to be bothered.

If that was the case, I shouldn't have joined the party in the first place, but today's party would include Gazel, Youm, and King Drum of the Kingdom of Blumund.

If the representatives of the four countries is Myourmiles, then they are the ones who are the big supporters. We can't afford not to show our faces.

"Shall I get rid of them myself?"

Souei said so, but with a straight face.

My instincts told me it would be a bloody scourge if I left it to him.

"N-no, it's okay. With my brilliant interpersonal skills, I'll be able to handle it just fine."

"I see...I understand. Then, I'll be escorting Rimuru-sama from a short distance away."

"Yeah, do that."

Okay, that's a relief.

This time, violence was strictly forbidden since the group was full of high-ranking people.

It doesn't have to be the bigwigs, but if it became an international issue, it wouldn't be just about us.

"My lord, I am here too, so do not worry!"

Ranga emerged from the shadows, asserting himself.

"Yeah, I'm counting on you!"

Love that guy.

Ranga's gesture soothed me, and my tension was eased.

Riding on that momentum, I went to the venue.

The ninth floor, one floor below, has a large floor plan.

It is designed to be used for various purposes, such as holding meetings with a large number of people, gathering the staff for events, and so on.

And now, the space has been decorated and turned into a party venue with standing tables.

By the way, the eighth floor is a cafeteria for the staff, where one can enjoy a meal while looking at the scenery. Coffee and tea are also available outside of mealtimes, so that business meetings and discussions can be held there.

The food served at the party was, of course, prepared by our chefs.

Assorted pickles, various soups, prosciutto, high-grade steaks, meatballs and roast beef, various pastas, takoyaki, yakisoba, okonomiyaki, curry and rice, hamburgers...huh?

There was no ramen, of course, but there was a lot of stuff on the menu that wouldn't normally be appropriate for a party.

“M-Myourmiles-kun?”

“What is it?”

“Isn’t this a weird choice of food?”

“Is that so? This is the most popular menu from the Monster Kingdom’s cafeteria.”

“Uh, well yeah, it is, but...huh?”

No, calm down.

Perhaps we should’ve made the menu more aristocratic, but there is no need to be bound by convention, right?

As long as we have the spirit to bring about a new wind, these menus may be the right choice.

“In the first place, we offered unusual cuisine at the Founding Festival. Rather, some people seemed to be expecting this.”

“I see, no problem then.”

“Well, I won’t complain even if there is a problem!”

Hmm! I like your roughness, Myourmiles-kun. I regretted that I was overthinking things and looked around again to see if there were any other problems.

Then my eyes met with the man who was in charge of setting up the venue.

It was Veryard.

“Well, well, Your Majesty Rimuru! Oh, yes, in my current position, would it be acceptable if I called you Rimuru-sama?”

He greeted me with a smiling face, and I nodded my head.

There was nothing wrong with it, but I had bitter memories of Veryard’s smile, so I couldn’t help but be overly cautious.

This is really no laughing matter for Myourmiles.

However, I think the Kingdom of Blumund was more unusual in that it flexibly changed the national system itself.

It would normally be unthinkable in the real-life world, and even if it were an absolute monarchy, it would be a dream to achieve it without bloodshed. The fact that King Drum accomplished it showed me that he was no ordinary person.

He was a genuine gambler, using his own country as a chip.

To be honest, I don’t have such courage, so I can only respect him.

As King Drum’s sword, Veryard was not to be underestimated.

“Today’s arrangements seem to be very careful and thorough, and I feel comfortable entrusting them to Veryard-dono. Please continue to support Myourmiles.”

“Of course. Also, please just call me Veryard. My father is the patriarch of my family,

which used to be the marquis family, but I plan to throw it away without inheriting it.”

“Eh—is that so?!”

No, the status of the nobility will be shaken in the future, but that’s only for the lower nobility. The Count status is doubtful, but I think the higher nobility of the Marquis family and above will be safe no matter what the situation is.

“Well, it is certain that we will change our name from aristocrats to noblemen<sup>42</sup> and eventually lose power. After all, I’m the one who proposed this to the Drum King.”

So it’s you!

I should be commended for swallowing those words.

“Hahaha, what, it’s just the way of the times. Right now, the aristocracy is running the government, but if the people get wise, they will be dissatisfied with the current situation. We need to gradually transfer the authority to them so that when that happens, they won’t be hostile.”

“That’s true, but if you’ve never been in politics before, you can’t run a country all of a sudden.”

I replied, and Veryard smirked.

“That’s why I’m going to become a commoner now and accept the authority that will be transferred to me.”

Oh, you mean…

It’s not cheating, it’s a race.

But I understand it’s very logical.

That strategy would certainly minimize complaints from the aristocracy.

But really, just how far ahead is this guy moving?

As far as I can tell, he’s as smart as anyone else. So much so that I’m afraid to call him out.

Myourmiles was also shaking his head, as if stunned.

‘I told you so, didn’t I?’—His eyes seemed to tell me, and I nodded my head in agreement.



The party started in an orderly fashion.

First, Myourmiles, the representative of the party, greeted the guests, and then King Drum made a toast.

Then the lectures began.

The important thing here is realizing that it is no good to be rude.

I don’t need to explain. There is royalty here, so of course it’s wrong.

<sup>42</sup>From ‘Kizoku’ to ‘Kazoku.’ I think this is implying that the nobility is going to change from pure blood nobility, to inherited nobility. But there’s no good way to translate this in English.

Nevertheless, there are always people who can't read the atmosphere, and as soon as we started chatting, a crowd formed around me.

Even my brilliant interpersonal skills had their limits!

It's one thing being surrounded by one or two people, but it's troublesome if I'm surrounded by more than ten people.

"Your Majesty Rimuru! Please listen to what I have to say!"

"We, too, would like to send a diplomat to your country!"

"We want to trade with you! Regarding the completion of the roads—"

"Hey, you little country, stay out of this!! As for us, my country is close to yours—"

"Oh great, a guy who can't wait his turn in order. You're not qualified to be a diplomat!"

"I am the crown prince. If you're talking about order, then rank should come first."

"Don't bring your own authority to another country!"

"Do you intend to start a war with my country?"

Well, it's all quite noisy.

There were so many comments that I wanted to respond with an, "I don't know," and there was even an atmosphere that made one feel like starting a fight. It was all giving me a headache. I can't ignore them, but they are really troublesome to deal with.

This was beyond my imagination.

I guess that just shows how important my position has become, but it's also probably because I was careless.

Because Gazel isn't being crowded like this.

Even Youm is proudly—Wait no. Is that Myuran guarding you with a smiling face?

I'm jealous.

Well, in Youm's case, he was a sharp-eyed warrior, so I suppose that's why a refined aristocrat wouldn't want to get close to him.

Oh, I wonder if El-tan rarely showed herself because she didn't want to get involved in such a commotion.

She had said that she has them wait for a turn to see her after going through the formalities, so that she won't see them without an appointment. I decided I'd do the same from now on.

Nevertheless, my first priority now was to deal with this situation.

As I was pondering what to do, an unexpected person came to my rescue.

"Why don't you all calm down a bit?"

It was Gabbana, who had interfered with me the first time we met.

"His Majesty Rimuru is the demon lord of the great Jura-Tempest Federation, and our greatest supporter. I understand your desperation, but I ask that you refrain yourselves today!"

Gabbana glared at them with a silent pressure, saying "Today is a celebration of new beginnings, so we can discuss business at another time."

The man who had cried in front of me earlier was now very reliable.

And then there was the reaction of the guests.

"W-Well, well, Gabbana-dono! I've heard that you've become a member of the 'federation,'

and I'm glad to see you're doing well..."

"Tha-That's right, I was a bit impatient. It wasn't for nothing if I was able to greet you today, so if you'll excuse me—"

"I'm sorry too. I hope we can meet again at a later date through the formal procedure."

Those who say this and walk away are still better, but most of them run away as quickly as possible. It wasn't a complimentary attitude, but I didn't want to make a scene.

In the first place, my availability is limited, so Rigurd is the one in charge. Since I only meet with carefully selected people here and there, I'm always sifting through a lot of people.

In the future, I plan to follow El-tan's example and be more strict so that I can try to avoid meeting with troublesome people as much as possible.

So, it's possible that I may never see these people again. With that in mind, I didn't mind a little rudeness.

Still, I was impressed with Gabbana.

Gabbana was keeping a close eye on me at a distance. Thanks to him, I was able to enjoy the party calmly.



Now that I was free to move around, I looked around at the other guests.

I had already made arrangements with Gazel and Youm in advance, so there was no need to go out of my way to greet them. They would be present at the meeting tomorrow, so if they had anything important to say, they could say it there.

Today, I just have to broaden my knowledge.

That's why I'm going to make small talk with people I'm interested in.

I looked around for someone, and there she was!

She's so beautiful that everyone was turning to look at her.

Who is it?

Yes, it's Hinata!!

Hinata was wearing a dress with the back wide open.

It was jet-black like a dark night, and studded with jewels like stars.

However, it is not the dress that was noteworthy, but Hinata's own sexiness.

Hinata's hair is short, so the bare skin from the nape of her neck to her waist is fully visible.

A ribbon was tied around her neck, but even that accentuated Hinata's sex appeal.



Her pure white skin was dazzling against the black dress.

No, it was too bright!!

It seems to be called a backless dress. I don't know who thought of it, but it's a wonderful design.

I'm saving it in my brain.

No, I'd rather have Ciel-san record this video—

«There is no such function.»

No, no, there is, right? You showed me the information inside the labyrinth with vivid images.

«This is not inside the labyrinth, so the recorded images are inaccessible.»

You're joking, right?! You can definitely do it! You were even saving the battle records of the labyrinth monsters for us to review later. It's the same thing, just a little more—

«Negative. *Need* not recognized.»

Why are you responding so mechanically?

Damn it! You're such an unreliable partner at these critical moments, seriously.

It couldn't be helped, so I asked my slime cells to do their best, and spoke to Hinata with a smile.

“Hello, Hinata-san. You look beautiful again today. That dress looks really good on you!”

Hinata was sipping her wine, put it on the table and turned to me. Then she opened her mouth, her gaze sharp and suspicious.

“Huh? You’re a flatterer now, aren’t you?”

“No, I’m not! I’m serious. It’s not flattery!”

I’m not very good at complimenting people on things I don’t mean, so I’m being half truthful.

And yet, Hinata snickered and didn’t take it seriously.

I couldn’t let the conversation end there.

Thinking that way, I desperately tried to repeat myself.

“Anyway, you really are bold. I don’t mean to be rude, but I didn’t think Hinata would wear a dress that aggressive.”

She glared at me.

I gulped and swallowed the rest of my words.

Uh-oh. I feel like I’m becoming less and less likable.

“If you think it’s rude, then maybe you shouldn’t say it.”

“I’m sorry, you’re right!”

I shouldn’t have crossed her. An apology was the only option.

Hinata's eyes glazed over.  
I'm getting impatient.  
That's when I sensed the aroma of wine.  
Hinata's sigh was endlessly sexy.  
The back view was also sexy, but the front view was already nosebleed-inducing.  
The dress was neck-length, but sleeveless, so there was nothing to hide her white shoulders.  
And most importantly, from side to side—  
“What are you looking at? I’m gonna kill you.”  
“I’m sorry.”  
Failure, a failure.  
I forgot I was in human form and stared at her.  
In that case, they’d know by looking at me.  
I’m just grateful my body can’t have nosebleeds.  
“Luminas insisted I wear this,” Hinata said.  
Nice work, Luminas!  
I’d like to give you a big thumbs up.  
I can picture Luminas with a smug look on her face, and I respect her for it.  
While inwardly leaping to praise Luminas, I kept a cool expression on my face.  
“Hmm, you’re right. Luminas is right. Because you really look beautiful today.”  
I say so with a crisp expression.  
I am not afraid of Hinata’s stare because I really mean it.  
—No, that’s a lie. The truth is, I was really scared.  
“Not that again—”  
Covering Hinata’s dumbfounded words with my lips—it would have been perfect if I could have imitated something like that, but one wrong move and it wouldn’t have been sexual harassment. I’d be a sexual predator, and I’m a chicken-hearted person, so I didn’t have the courage to go that far.  
That’s why I told her in sincere words, “It’s true!”  
Then I saw Hinata’s cheeks turn red.  
I got this! I’m the best today.  
«It’s only because she’s drunk.»  
*Hm?* I turned my attention to the wine that Hinata was drinking.  
“What? Isn’t this a bit high in alcohol?”  
“Is that so? It’s really good.”  
Does Hinata have a surprisingly low tolerance for alcohol?  
She doesn’t look like it, but that’s what Ciel-san says...  
I’ve always been interested in her sex appeal, so I wanted to know how she was doing in that area.

I held up three fingers and asked Hinata.  
“How many fingers am I holding up?”  
“Do you think I’m stupid?”  
“No, no, no, I’d never do that—”  
As I hurriedly denied it, Hinata let out a big sigh.  
“You know, I’m still a Saint, right? I’ve traveled with Chloe, and Luminas has taught me a lot since I came back to life, so I can detoxify alcohol if I want to!”  
Can it be that you tricked me, Ciel-san?!  
If that’s the case, you’re right.  
Let’s just say that after that, it was very difficult to calm down the angry Hinata.  
So, time went by without me having time to ask why Hinata’s cheeks were so red.

\*

It was the day after the party.

After the lunch break, the meeting began.  
The participants—  
The first five were the rulers of the countries supporting the Four Nations—myself, Gazel, Youm, Myuran, and King Drum.  
All of us had already reached a consensus regarding this topic, so this time, we’d only be participating for approval.

Next was Myourmiles, who was nominated as a representative by the four of us excluding Myuran, and Hinata who was representing the Western Holy Church.

From the Western States Council, there was the chairman himself. I think his name was Leicester. As always, he had a bushy white beard.

The rest were carefully selected members from various countries, about thirty total, all gathered in the conference room.

Veryard also participated as a secretary.  
Cien stepped forward as the moderator.  
“Ladies and gentlemen, I would like to thank you all from the bottom of my heart for taking time out of your busy schedules to join us here today. Well then, let us begin at once. Allow me to start by explaining the crisis that will occur in the near future.”

And with that, Cien began his explanation.  
The purpose of today’s meeting is exactly what Myourmiles wanted to hear yesterday.  
The existence of a definite enemy and their goals.  
The anticipated effects of the war and how we should deal with them.  
The participants were carefully selected in order to avoid fear due to panicking.

No amount of crying or screaming would change the reality, so we needed to take optimal action as much as possible. In order to do this, the leader must never be flustered, but that was easier said than done.

So first, let's move on to the explanation.

I have given the same explanation many times, so I was grateful to Myourmiles for arranging this occasion.

Cien's explanation ended.

"...And so, Demon Lord Rimuru-sama has won the war against the Empire, but a new enemy, Michael, has emerged."

Chancellor Leicester muttered, followed by the senators from the various countries.

"And this Michael is leading the angels?"

"It's the Tenma Great War. I didn't think the 500-year cycle of disasters would happen during my lifetime..."

Hearing that, I decided to add something to the conversation to avoid any misunderstanding.

I raised my hand to speak.

"Well, as I've just explained, the enemy's goal is to revive Veldanava. We can only speculate on the method, not prove it. And most importantly, we don't know exactly when. We think it will be soon, but Michael is a long-lived species. It could be tomorrow, it could be in a few years, and it could even be in a few decades."

That was the most troubling part.

We didn't know when it would happen.

For the time being, if there was any movement, we would know it from Dino's daily report. The accuracy of that information would be shared with Obera via Milim for confirmation.

So far, Michael had not moved.

It was eerie, but there was nothing we could do about it, so we left it alone.

In that case, it was important to keep vigilance against the enemy who may attack at any moment, but we would still have to continue our daily activities...

It had been the same in Japan. The rate of occurrence of a major subduction zone earthquake within 10 years was 60 percent, and within 30 years it was as high as 99 percent, but that was just how we lived our daily lives.

In order not to be troubled when something happens, we should prepare in advance. Then, we should cherish our daily lives, I guess.

In fact, I was more afraid of volcanoes than earthquakes, but that's because they were natural disasters that were impossible to deal with.

It was said that if a huge caldera eruption occurred on Mount Aso, it would have caused catastrophic damage. It was also called a catastrophic eruption, and there would have been no escape from it in Japan.

Some parts of Hokkaido might have been safe, but there was no doubt that Japan would be destroyed.

That was a hypothetical story—

Even if it was predicted, and the government had said that it would happen within a year, it would still be doubtful...

It would be doubtful that it would actually happen, and there would be no escape plan even if one wanted to believe it.

There was no country that would accept all of Japan's citizens, and it was also doubtful that people could escape to other countries one by one.

Of course, if the prediction were 100 percent certain, the government would do everything they can, but if the political system was different, it was unlikely to be accepted, and in the end, only those who can rely on their own contacts would be able to escape.

I also think that somewhere in the back of my mind, there was the thought that 'if something happens, then we'll talk about it when it happens.' It was better to live happily every day rather than to worry too much and live in fear every day.

It doesn't mean that the place you escape to would be absolutely safe, but I guess you could think of it as a natural disaster because there's no point in thinking of it otherwise.

There is a saying, "Do your best and wait for your destiny," meaning that it is better to do the best you can in the moment to live like a human being.

"Therefore, I want people to cherish their daily lives while preparing for Michael's attack at any time. That is why I only want the leadership to know about this fact. I hope you will cooperate with us with that in mind."

I concluded my remarks.

Everyone was silent as I spoke.

Some of them groaned loudly.

After tens of seconds had passed without anyone speaking, Hinata broke the silence.

"The Western Holy Church pledges its full support."

Hinata's statement was followed by Chancellor Leicester.

"Well, that makes sense. The development plans being hurriedly carried out by the Western nations were preparations for that, weren't they?"

Cien nodded in agreement.

"That is correct. Everything is as Rimuru-sama wills it."

In addition to laying the rails for the magitrain, the construction of the station building was also underway. The station was then expanded to provide an evacuation site for the residents of the surrounding area.

During normal times, the building could be used as a gymnasium, an auditorium, or for various other purposes.

I was going to use this occasion to ask them to hold an evacuation drill for the local residents. But before I could say anything else, Chairman Leicester spoke up.

"The important thing is to prepare in advance, which makes sense. I understand. I personally do not have the authority to interfere in the policies of other countries, but I can suggest evacuation drills as a possible solution. I'd be happy to help."

"Indeed. I am only a member of the council, but back home I am a marquis. I will advise

the king and have my people trained.”

“That’s very good. I will cooperate!”

The councilors also agreed.

It was much quicker than I expected.

It was probably because they had been carefully selected and there were no fools who would argue here.

Or rather, Myourmiles said that the meeting would be held in a small group so that this would happen. The reason is that a large group of people would not be able to reach a consensus on such an important decision. The idea was to persuade a small group of powerful people first, and then let the remaining members persuade the others individually.

It can be said that his plan was successful.

Still, it was unclear how the council would vote on this, but about that—

“Hohoho. Your Majesty Rimuru seems to be worried about the council’s decision, but you can rest assured, because there is no one who can stand against Testarossa-dono.”

Huh?

“Hahaha, that is true. Your life is more important than your own interests. Whether it’s a matter of life and death for your country, or if it’s a matter of whether or not to train your people to evacuate, you should obey the voice of Testarossa-dono.”

“Correct. This is not a matter I want to fight to get my opinion across.”

“Yes. Since this is beneficial to us as well, I think it will pass unanimously.”

The reaction of the senators was not what Myourmiles and I had expected.

It almost felt like there was no need to be cautious in advance.

“Well, I guess I was wrong about that, too. I’ve never met her, but Testarossa seems to be quite the remarkable person.”

Veryard was impressed.

The eyes of the senators looking at Veryard were warm.

I don’t know if they were being kind, or envious...

“Huh, aren’t you all a little too careless? I am Testarossa-sama’s loyal servant, despite my appearance. I am obligated to report on this meeting, so please do not forget that.”

Cien was the one who interrupted, but when the senators heard him, they fell into a panic.

“It’s a misunderstanding! Please believe me!!”

“I didn’t mean any disrespect, I was just praising her leadership—”

“I’m telling the truth—Oh! Ahh! Glory to Testarossa-sama!!”

I don’t know what to say about the last guy, but his emotions and desperation were palpable. I hadn’t expected Testarossa to be feared so much, so I was surprised.

“Cien, stop bullying everyone.”

I said, rebuking the laughing Cien.

And it seems that Veryard had also realized Testarossa’s menace with just this exchange.

“Hmm, I thought we should meet once, but Testarossa-dono seems to be busy, so let’s not. So, are we done with the meeting for today?”

And just like that, he moved aside without stepping into the minefield.  
His ability to foresee danger was something to learn from, and I acknowledged Veryard's excellence once again.



The meeting was over, but I remembered that I had one more thing to tell everyone.

"Oh, yes. I heard from Testarossa that Masayuki, who became the Emperor of the East, wants to establish a cooperative relationship with the West. He wants to join the Western States Council, so what do you say?"

This was reported on the 'Telepathy Net' just before I came here.

I told them in a light-hearted way, but most of them stopped moving as if in shock.

" " " ...Wha?" " "

They all turned to look at me, their eyes wide open.

The only ones who weren't surprised were Gazel, Youm, Myourmiles, and Cien, whom I had explained to beforehand.

I hadn't even told King Drum yet, and he was just as shocked as Veryard. It's a secret, but I was a little satisfied to see his surprised face, which was so rarely seen.

But it seems that what I said was a bigger bomb than I had thought it would be.

"I didn't hear about that!"

"I just told you."

"Did you know, King Gazel?"

"Hm, I was consulted, but I haven't heard any details. I didn't even know they were that far along."

Oh, so Gazel knew?

«No, we have discussed the hopes for that to happen, but haven't talked about any specifics, including dates and times.»

That may have been the case.

There was a bit of a timing lapse, but since I have a cell phone, I probably should have told him.

I was going to meet him today anyway, so I had thought I'd explain it there. But it wasn't convenient, so I just decided to announce it here and now.

"So, Youm didn't know about it either, right?"

"Yeah, I didn't hear about it."

"Then why aren't you surprised?"

"Oh. If I became surprised every time the Boss did something like this, I wouldn't be able

to survive.”

I feel like I was just dissed in a big way.

Myuran, who was listening beside him, put her hand on his head, but she didn’t say anything, so I guess she must have agreed with him.

In that case, the stares coming from everyone are a little painful.

“I’m appalled. Why do you always have to talk about important things as if they’re nothing?”

Hinata’s stare was painful.

“We-Well, even if you say that...”

I couldn’t help but use honorifics. Could it be that this was my fault?

I had been so preoccupied with the battle against Michael that I thought it was only natural for the Empire to take a cooperative stance.

We had been supporting them so that they’d be in line with us. I didn’t expect everyone to be this surprised, because it was only natural for this to happen.

“You don’t seem to be remorseful.”

Guah?!

“Wait a minute, Hinata-san! You knew that our country and the Empire were at war, right? We won, so we exercised our rights as the victorious nation and decided to cooperate from now on. That would inevitably lead cooperation with the West!”

I blurted out my excuses in a spirited manner.

However, Hinata’s eyes did not stop staring.

Well, you know.

I’m not wrong, but I might have made a mistake in not telling them.

It’s not like I didn’t have any means of communication, and saying “I was busy” was no excuse.

In that case, I was at fault, too.

I was about to give an apology—but suddenly, Veryard nodded deeply and offered me a helping hand.

“You are quite right. This is not His Majesty Rimuru’s fault, but rather ours for not asking for the details.”

You understand, you do understand, Veryard-kun!

As expected of the smartest man I know, I couldn’t ask for a better ally.

Hinata and Veryard glare at each other.

Hinata is the one who breaks.

“Well, yes. It only took a little thought to realize that Rimuru would do what was best for us. It’s just—”

“Just?”

“It’s just that, given the common sense of those of us who live in the western economic sphere, it’s hard to believe that an empire that’s been our enemy since ancient times would behave in such a way. It’s just that our preconceptions were too big to consider this possibility...”

Hinata looked frustrated.

It wasn't hard to understand.

It's like a superpower that had been hostile for such a long time was suddenly offering to reconcile.

I suppose one should first be skeptical, but the fact that it came from me, the victor, was significant.

There was little risk in simply building a cooperative relationship, and at a time when the Great War was about to begin, it would be foolish for humans to go to war with each other.

"Your Majesty Rimuru, I would like to ask you—"

"What is it?"

I encourage the questioner, Chancellor Leicester, to speak.

"The discussion with the Empire, where will it take place? And one more thing, when you referred to the Imperial Emperor as 'Masayuki,' are you referring to 'Masayuki-dono the 'Shining?'"

Chancellor Leicester was excited.

The second question caused a louder buzz than the first. I realized that I hadn't explained myself well enough, as the others were getting excited too.

"Well, the meeting is in the Kingdom of Ingracia. He said he would like to attend the next council meeting if possible, as soon as possible. And to answer your second question, Leicester, you are correct. My friend, Chosen Hero Masayuki, was recently crowned as Emperor."

As soon as I said that, the conference room erupted in applause.

"That's great! As expected of Masayuki-sama!"

"Yes, how wonderful! Now we can avoid war."

"I don't know how this is possible, but I guess anything is possible with Masayuki-sama!"

"You're right! Even the Evil Empire was not an enemy of Masayuki-sama!!"

And all hell broke loose.

"I had heard of the coronation of the new Emperor, but I had no idea it was Masayuki-dono..."

Even Chancellor Leicester was in tears, but this reaction was unexpected.

Somehow, I think I've done Masayuki a disservice...

There's no such thing as a space opera story where a Chosen Hero overthrows the Empire!

Of course, if you think about it normally, it's impossible for an individual to overthrow a country. The fact that they can believe that such a thing has taken place shows that they have a ridiculous amount of faith in Masayuki.

But now that it's happened, there's nothing I can do.

"Well, that's the way it is. I don't know the details, so you'll have to ask him yourself."

With that said, I threw all the trouble onto Masayuki, who knew nothing about the situation.

In this way, the plan to implement the evacuation drills was shared, and it was decided that the new Emperor of the Eastern Empire would be present at the next council meeting.

\*

So that's how I've spent the last five months.

There have been a few small mistakes, but the preparations have proceeded steadily.

The next council meeting is scheduled for two weeks from now in Ingracia, and the consensus between Masayuki and the council leaders is sound. In effect, the Empire's accession is expected to be approved.

It was safe to say that Testarossa would take care of that.

On the surface, the unification of humanity has been achieved.

The demon lord's forces are well prepared.

Now, we just have to hope that the enemy's strength is not greater than expected...

As I was thinking this, I suddenly received a call from Dino.

"Ah, it's Dino, can you hear me?"

"Of course I can. So, has there been any movement?"

It wasn't in the morning, so I'm pretty sure something had happened.

"Hmm, I'd say there was, so I'll keep in touch for the time being. But there are so many things to say, and it's difficult to decide where to start..."

Huh?

He was talking in an incomprehensible manner, but I was sure that something had happened.

The peaceful daily life came to an end as soon as I heard the news.

*That Time I Got Reincarnated as a Slime*

**Chapter  
3**

**Reminiscences  
of the Clowns**

## Chapter 3

### Reminiscences of the Clowns

Going back in time.

Kagali, who was taken from the battlefield by Feldway, regained consciousness just as Lieutenant Kondou was killed in battle.

This was the result of being freed from control.

But the current location was a different world that Kagali had no knowledge of.

*What's going on?*

Kagali tried to grasp the situation.

Then she saw a familiar face.

“Dino...”

“Hey! It looks like you’re awake, Kazalim. I guess that Kondou guy is dead.”

“You, you noticed...I see, so the boss told you.”

Kagali was surprised to hear Dino call her by a name she had abandoned, but her gaze wandered to where she found Yuuki.

He was sitting comfortably in his chair, but his expression was blank.

In other words, like Kagali had been, Yuuki was under the control of someone. Kagali instantly realized that it would not be surprising if Yuuki had revealed her true identity.

“Well. I don’t know much about what happened to you, but to be honest, I’m more interested in that appearance.”

Dino said as such, looking at the current Kagali, who looked nothing like Demon Lord Kazalim.

*He’s still so aloof and unpredictable as always*

Kagali thought while releasing her tension.

Actually, Kagali did not have enough fighting ability now. She may be above A rank, but in the eyes of the real monsters, she is a small fry.

Dino’s ability was unknown, but it was obvious that she was no match for him.

Therefore, Kagali thought of the best move she could make at the moment.

In other words, she was gathering information.

“So, where are we?”

Dino replied in a cryptic manner.

“Did you notice we’re in another world? This is a special place, the place of beginnings, adjacent to all worlds but isolated from them as well: the Heavenly Star Palace.”

The name was unfamiliar.

However, it was filled with words of great importance.

*The place of beginnings... No way, the birthplace of Star King Dragon Veldanava?!*

The place of beginnings was said to have existed before the creation of all worlds. It was a folklore that could only be remembered in mythology.

It was said to exist, but no one had ever even seen it.

“How...”

“To get here, you need a ‘key’ to go through the gate, but I didn’t know what it was. But now that I’ve been brought here, I understand. I’m not going to tell you, though.”

Kagali was annoyed but remembered that Dino was a man who did not like to waste time. If he wouldn’t tell her now, then he wouldn’t tell her anything, no matter what she did.

In that case, all she had to do was ask something else.

“I won’t force you, so just answer what you can tell me.”

“How troublesome.”

“We’ve known each other a long time, isn’t it fine?”

“Che, what’s in it for me?”

“I remember doing a lot of work for you, so—”

Before Kagali could finish, Dino straightened up.

“What do you want to know? If I ask you that, you’ll forget about the past, right?”

“Yes, of course I will.”

Kagali smiled at him.

Dino was still the same. Kagali was relieved to see that, despite the incomprehensible situation.

“Our boss, Yuuki Kagurazaka—why is he still under control? You just said that Kondou is dead—no way?!”

“You’re really quick to guess, aren’t you? I know you’re probably right, so there’s no point in saying it, but I’ll tell you. You were dominated by Kondou, but Yuuki is being controlled by the same person who lent Kondou the power.”

“As I thought...”

It was an unbelievable fact that she didn’t want to believe—that there was an entity that could lend someone the power to control others.

However, Dino wouldn’t lie like this. He was the type of person who didn’t talk if he didn’t want to, so his information was more truthful.

Yuuki is being controlled—he has a very specific constitution that nullifies all Skills, but the fact that someone has the power to break through it is scary.

She wanted to get Yuuki back to normal in order to escape from this place, but had no idea

how to do that. In that case...

“Where are my cute children?”

“You mean the ones standing behind you?”

Kagali turned around in a panic. There was no sign of them, but that was to be expected.

*I see, so you've become combat dolls (killing mode), that just follow my orders.*

Kagali warned herself that she seemed to be in a hurry even though she thought she was calm. Then, she released the order and returned Teare and Footman to their former selves.

Incidentally, there were also nine unfamiliar undead elves standing in the line, but those were none of Kagali's concern.

—For the time being, she had a vague memory of the time when she was under control.

She remembers being ordered to use the forbidden spell ‘Dead Birthday,’ so they must have been created by that. However, it was not Kagali’s will, and she had no attachment to those she created.

“Oh, Chairman! So you’re all right! I was so worried about you!”

“Hooohohoho. Teare is right. Chairman, did the boss help you?”

“No, he didn’t. There’s no point in hiding it, so I’ll tell you right now—this situation is the worst,” Kagali said, informing them of the current situation.

Dino didn’t care that he was being ignored and fell asleep.

“I see, it’s because we’re not good enough, isn’t it?”

“That’s not true, Teare. Even the boss was dominated, so I’m sure we wouldn’t be able to resist no matter how much we struggled.”

“Then what are you going to do? Are you going to obey?”

“Since there are no guards, can’t we escape?”

Footman asks and Teare gives her opinion.

Kagali’s expression is dark as she answers.

“That’s the problem. As much as I’d like to escape, we’re talking about the ‘Heavenly Star Palace’ which is in another world. You can’t escape using magic.”

Actually, Kagali had already tried the elemental magic: ‘Warp Portal.’ If there had been any sign of success, she had intended to take Teare, Footman, and Yuuki and escape.

However, since the coordinates of the current location were unknown, the spell did not work.

*It was fortunate that I was able to break free from the control, but it was clear to them that I wouldn’t be able to do anything with just that anyways...*

It’s a shame, but that’s the truth.

Sure, there were no guards, but that was only because Kagali and the others were believed to be unable to escape.

“Dino.”

“Huh, oh. What, just when people are about to take a nice nap. You still have questions?”

“I don’t suppose you could answer them, but is there any way we can get out of here?”

“Do you think there is?”

“...No.”

“Right? I’ve always appreciated your quick thinking. So you’d better stop wasting your time and keep quiet.”

The result was as expected, but still a stalemate.

The ‘Heavenly Star Palace’ is a very small flat world. It exists within the inner surface of a sphere, with the lower half being the earth and the upper half being the sky.

It is less than a hundred square kilometers in size, has only a temperate climate with no four seasons, and includes a beautiful chalk castle.

But that was perfect.

The flowers did not wither, the fruit did not rot, the water was clean, and the earth was moist. Therefore, there were always fields of flowers in full bloom, and the sparse trees bore sweet and fragrant heavenly fruits.

In this world where time seemed to have stopped, there was no sense of change.

Kagali and the others were waiting in the garden in a gazebo. From there, they could see the whole castle and, on the other side, the huge gate at the edge of the world.

There was no sign of anyone coming out of the castle.

But with the gates closed, it seemed clear that escape from this world was impossible.

Therefore, Kagali was not discouraged by Dino’s answer and instead tried to calmly think of a countermeasure. However, someone came out of the castle to interrupt her.



He was a man with a muscular physique and a fearless face.

He seemed to be emitting a gushing spirit from his body, which indicated that he was very strong.

“Dino-sama, I am troubled. How can a man of your stature be so friendly to such a group of people?”

The man looked down on Kagali and the others in a very natural manner.

Kagali was annoyed by this person but put up with it for the time being. She had a cautious personality.

“Gnome, wasn’t it? From the looks of it, it seems you’ve successfully incarnated.”

“Yes! The body of a man named Vega was a very good catalyst. His regenerative powers are high, and at this rate, I’m sure the others and Dhalis-sama will be able to incarnate as well.”

“That’s good to know.”

Dino replied, looking uninterested.

Kagali, unaware of the situation, listened to the conversation in silence.

Vega was definitely the ‘Vega the Power, one of the heads (leaders) of Cerberus. In Kagali’s

vague memory, there was a scene of them coming to this place together.

*Vega as a catalyst? Perhaps as a substitute for incarnation? No, that's certainly possible. That man inherited the blood one of Rosso's research achievements, 'Magic Inquisitor.' He is both monster and human, and can recover from any injury as long as he's fed.*

In other words, he would regenerate even if its arms were cut off, and in fact, there was even an experimental result that had shown that he would revive as long as his head was left.

This is where the horrifying part came in—even the parts of the body that had been cut off would attempt to return to human form as a monster with no sense of self.

That was why Yuuki had strictly ordered Vega to collect his limbs if they were ever cut off. But...

It seems that this Gnome guy took advantage of Vega's traits to obtain a hollow body.

*Why did he need a body in the first place? What is his true identity? Does it mean he needs to incarnate, like a demon? No, judging from this divine presence, he's an angel. That would certainly be more powerful than possessing a human or a monster.*

Kagali thinks fast.

She's lost most of her fighting ability, but her mind is still intact.

And she had come to a rough conclusion.

This man, Gnome, is an angel—or some kind of spiritual life form. And he incarnated in order to invade the earth.

Vega is being used as a catalyst to create flesh. He may be alive, but he is not in a position to move.

This was mostly correct, except that Gnome's race was a phantom.

He had strengthened his pseudomorphic body with magicule by fusing them with Vega's cells. In this way, Gnome had succeeded in complete incarnation by incorporating the substance.

The substances taken in were proteins and carbohydrates collected from the ground. In other words, all he had to do was eat. It was a different method from that of undead elf, but it was more convenient for Gnome, who was a semi-mental life form.

By the way, this Gnome is one of Zalario's subordinates. He had been left out of the attack on Ramiris' labyrinth and had been staying at home.

Then Feldway returned with Vega and the others, and ordered Gnome to incarnate. Zalario and his group returned in a timely manner and met with Dino and the rest.

With the success of Gnome as an experiment, the others began to incarnate. That is why Gnome was the first one to come out.

Gnome, a former Throne Angel, is now a high-ranking subordinate "general" level phantom. Because of his successful incarnation, he was now able to exert more power than the Demon Lord Seed.

From Gnome's perspective, Kagali, who was almost the same as a human, was nothing more than a speck of dust.

Therefore, naturally, he would speak as one who was superior to them.

"Kagali, right? You're just tools to increase our strength. You seem to have regained your

free will after the death of Kondou, who was more or less a useful tool, but don't get carried away. Dino-sama here is nothing like you!"

"Hey, stop it right there."

"No, Dino-sama! Dino-sama is one of the great 'Seven Primordial Angels!' It is too merciful of you to speak so casually with these people!"

"That's why I'm saying that Kazalim and I are old acquaintances."

"My name is Kagali now. Can you call me that from now on?"

"I'd say it's a pain in the ass to remember, but it's nice that the name has been shortened. All right, Kagali."

Unlike her previous incarnation as a man, Kagali is now a beautiful woman. The name change didn't feel out of place, and Dino accepted it easily.

Ignoring Gnome, Dino and Kagali continued their friendly conversation...but this irritated Gnome.

Gnome's master is a former cherub named Dhalis. A noble man with great fighting skills, he was Zalaro's second-in-command.

But even Dhalis cannot match up to the supreme beings, the Primordials.

They did not receive their names only recently, like Gnome did.

They were created and named by the god Veldanava himself. They were the great seraphim who had been destroying demons since the very beginning.

To Gnome, they were like gods, and Kagali's attitude was unbearable.

Even if Dino himself allowed it, it would affect Zalaro's 'status' if left unchecked. Thinking so, Gnome finally decided to use force.

"I told you not to get carried away!!"

He fired a mass of spiritual energy (Tenkoudan) at Kagali, who was sitting on a chair.

Dino did not move.

Because he didn't have to.

"Hooohohoho. Is the long story over? Even so, you're the one who's being rude to the Chairman!"

"Yeah, yeah, that's right! Do it, Footman!"

Kagali's dear companions and loyal clowns are ready to take on Gnome—



The battle had become one-sided and fierce.

Gnome was originally a phantom that had been at war with the insectars as a force under Zalaro's command.

Although he had just gained a physical body, he did not feel any discomfort. On the contrary,

his fighting ability had increased.

His existence value exceeded one million. On top of that, in order to fill up his empty body, the magicule count was currently increasing.

Against Gnome, who is in great shape, was Footman, who had a higher fighting ability than Clayman.

His intelligence is low, but his power was unmatched. His existence value had reached 1.3 million, and now that the restriction had been lifted, his power was incomparable to when he had fought Geld.

“Boom!!”

Footman punched Gnome while shouting this.

“Gupaah?!”

Gnome’s face caved in, and he was blown away.

“Hohoho. I’m coming for you!”

He chased after Gnome with no regard for him and hit and hit and hit.

He grabbed Gnome’s foot, swung him around and threw him into the air, causing Footman to also jump. He bounced back, gained momentum, and used his own body like a cannonball to plunge into Gnome’s back.

“GOOO—!”

He then grabbed Gnome and slammed him into the ground. Footman’s entire weight was also on top of Gnome’s back, adding to the momentum crushing him into the earth.

Although Footman is not very intelligent, he has a good sense of combat. If Gnome had gotten Vega’s cells, he would regenerate after being torn or injured. He instinctively knew that such attacks were meaningless, so he fought by accumulating damage and depriving him of stamina.

Gnome was puzzled by Footman, who was much stronger than he had imagined.

*H-How can this be?! How can I, a phantom general, be inferior to this unknown person?!*

The incarnation had greatly increased his fighting ability, and yet, he was losing to him.

Gnome was baffled by this fact.

“What, what are you—?!”

“Me? I’m Footman. I’m a Moderate Clown Troupe member, Footman the ‘Angry Pierrot.’ Pleased to make your acquaintance!”

Footman bowed condescendingly and announced his name politely.

This relaxed attitude struck a nerve with Gnome.

And then there was Teare.

“I’ll say my name too! I’m Teare. Teare the ‘Teardrop,’ of the Moderate Clown Troupe! After Footman, you’ll have to play with me!”

She was saying it in a cute way, but was not hiding her evil intentions.

Although not as powerful as Footman, Teare was also quite strong. Her existence value was a little over a million, and her Unique Skill was a vicious trump card.

It wouldn’t work now. However, if Footman was defeated, then Teare would come into her

own.

Looking forward to that time, Teare continued to watch over Footman's battle.

Once again, Footman's onslaught has begun.

Punching, kicking, and slamming. Like a cat shaking a mouse, Footman is hunting down Gnome.

Gnome is getting impatient.

Footman and Teare laugh at him.

Kagali, who was watching over them, was analyzing the situation calmly.

*It's the worst. There is no future for us if we continue like this. Even if we win this battle, Gnome seems to be a low-level member. We have Teare, but even that doesn't seem like it would help.*

Kagali glanced at Yuuki.

*I don't think Teare can win against an opponent that Yuuki-sama couldn't defeat...*

Besides, angels and demons cannot be physically destroyed. Unless one uses a special skill, they will come back to life even if Gnome was killed here.

As soon as he took in Vega's cells, he became physically unable to die. Moreover, there was a high probability of resurrection even after death, so the battle itself seemed pointless.

After all, defeat was guaranteed. Knowing this, Kagali felt like a fool.

"Stop it, Footman. That's enough playing around."

"Huh? Are you sure, Chairman?"

"Yes. We can't escape from here anyway. Not unless we can destroy that big gate, but that seems impossible no matter what."

If Dino's words were to be believed, then this was a closed-off world called the 'Heavenly Star Palace.' They needed a key to get through the gate, and Kagali and the others had no way to obtain it.

It was a dead end.

Seeing Kagali, Gnome laughed loudly.

"Hah! Hahahaha! That's right. If you understand that much, then we can make this quick. All you have to do is work as hard as you can as a tool. If you do, I'll take good care of you as a capable subordinate."

Seeing that Footman had stopped moving, Gnome understood the situation. It was unexpected that he couldn't defeat Footman, but Kagali, his master, was clever.

As long as he could control their master, Footman and Teare would be nothing but puppets. If so, Gnome's superiority would be preserved.

Thinking this, Gnome regained his composure, but the next moment, he was frightened by the overwhelming presence of death that surrounded him.

"How unsightly, Gnome. It was a mistake to give you a name."

Before he knew it, the great gate had opened, revealing three figures.

One of them, a striking beauty with long jet-black hair that looked as if it was studded with stars in the night sky, was Zalario, the leader of the "Three Phantom Commanders."



When Zalario returned, he had hidden himself and had watched Gnome's words and actions. He was dismayed and disappointed by the fecklessness of the situation.

His companions, Pico and Gracia, walked towards Dino, away from Zalario.

"Yo, good work."

"Ah. I'm tired from work, is there a dispute?"

"Hey, hey, what's going on?"

They asked in hushed tones, but Dino just shrugged and said, 'You'll see.' Pico and Gracia turned to Gnome, noticing that he didn't want to explain.

"Za-Zalario-sama?!"

"Don't say my name, it's dirty."

"N-no way! Please wait. This is a misunderstanding—"

"You are the one who is misunderstanding. My word is justice. Therefore, there is no misunderstanding."

"Th-that's..."

Saying yes would be admitting his mistake. But denying it would mean to antagonize Zalario.

Gnome was in an instant danger, but there was no way out of this situation.

"Compared to you, no, it's a bit rude to compare. Feldway's find is more useful to me than you."

Zalario's words were plain and matter-of-fact, devoid of any flicker of emotion. However, Gnome sensed something ominous in his voice, and desperately spoke up.

"Please wait—"

But it was all too late.

The noble Zalario hates fools.

"Your sin is that you misjudged your own worth. Considering the years you have served me, I will forgive you just by erasing that 'personality'<sup>43</sup>."

Zalario said cruelly.

*Erasing your 'personality'??*

Kagali was shocked.

"No way! N-no, no. Forgive me, please forgive me, Za—"

Zalario would not allow Gnome to call his name.

Heavenly Punishment Roaring Thunder, "Jupiter."<sup>44</sup>

A ray of lightning flashed from Zalario's fingertips.

The divine scorpion burned Gnome.

And yet, his body was left intact. However, his mind had been initialized with a catastrophic amount of information and was overwritten with a new 'personality.'

It was a broken power.

<sup>43</sup>The word is "Jinkaku (人格)" refers to the 'personality' and 'character' someone has, but it also means the 'individuality' of that person. It is essentially a person's 'sense of self.'

<sup>44</sup>"Tenbatsu Todoroki Kaminari (Jupiter)"

Zalario hadn't even been serious in Ramiris' labyrinth.

And Kagali, who had witnessed such power, knew that the situation was hopeless.

*It's impossible. He is not a fightable opponent. I thought Dino was trouble, but this guy...he's in the same class as Guy and Milim...it's a whole other level.*

It was a whole other dimension.

So Kagali gave up all resistance.

"So, what happens to me?"

Kagali asked openly.

If she was going to be punished, she would at least keep her pride intact until the end.

"Nothing at all. Though I'm not going to apologize for the trouble Gnome has caused you."

"Eh?"

Kagali was perplexed by the casualness of the conversation.

From Zalario's point of view, he was telling the truth.

It was Lieutenant Kondou who had picked Kagali up, but it had been Feldway's decision. It was Feldway's will to use the power that Michael had given him to create bodies for incarnation.

This was successfully accomplished, and although there were only nine of them, they were wonderfully prepared.

The transcendent beings, Zalario and the others, needed to select the bodies to incarnate. As with their current temporary bodies, mere humans and monsters would not be able to withstand their power and would disintegrate.

This was similar to the situation where primordials competed with each other for incarnation.

The fact that they could not easily manifest in the material world also made it difficult for them to carry out their invasion strategy.

Kagali conveniently existed in this situation, and the idea of using undead elves as an elementary body emerged. They had to try it out but could say that the result was good.

The idea of using Vega had also been adopted as an alternative, but the result was Gnome running out of control, and Zalario judged it to be a failure because it seemed to affect his personality.

In comparison, undead elves did not have free will. The power of an undead elf had been proven by Footman, and he judged that it would be enough to withstand Zalario's possession.

"But I reject the idea of using this Vega guy. Gnome was a more cautious man, but I can't help but think it would have had a strange effect."

Zalario muttered to no one in particular, but Kagali listened and thought about it. Then, without thinking, she opened her mouth to answer when she didn't have to.

"Vega is greedy. Befitting of a position that symbolizes Power, he takes in every desire he can and makes it his own."

"Hoh?"

'Oh, no,' she thought, but it was too late.

Faced with the silent pressure to continue, she proceeded to state her reasoning.

“Vega is pure. He obeys the strong and eats the weak. He’s a vile character, but he has his own beliefs. That’s why he’s strong.”

He doesn’t take it personally when he loses, and he’ll stoop to any level if he thinks he can’t win. He believes that as long as he can survive and make it to the next level, he will win.

That is why Vega had never felt defeated. He believed that anyone who overlooked him was an idiot, and that he should pay them back one day when he is able to win.

That is how Kagali evaluated Vega.

*Although Yuuki-sama is superior in terms of greed.*

After seeing through Vega’s character, he had made good use of it. Kagali also admired Yuuki’s strength.

“I see. So you’re saying that it’s possible that such a greedy nature has permeated every single cell of Vega?”

Kagali, who had thought she hadn’t explained it well enough, nodded at Zalario’s accurate point.

“Exactly. That’s why I honestly don’t recommend growing and using his cells.”

“I’ll keep that in mind.”

Zalario said, turning his attention back to the castle.

“I see... That thing is definitely useless. You follow me.”

“Eh?”

Despite asking, Zalario was already quickly heading towards the castle. Gnome, whose presence had become scarce, naturally followed Zalario.

Kagali wondered for a moment what to do, but then decided that it would not be wise to disobey.

“You two, follow me.”

“Yes, sir.”

“Yes!”

Kagali followed Zalario, taking Footman and Teare with her. Then, as if it were natural, Yuuki followed Kagali.

Only Dino and three others were left.

“What are we going to do?”

“This has nothing to do with us, so we can’t do anything about it.”

“Right.”

“I think that’s the point. Pico, don’t be too accommodating to Dino. If you don’t, I’ll be the one who gets in trouble.”

“Yes.”

“Hey, come on, you’re making it sound like I’m no good, aren’t you?”

“You’re no good.”

“You’re a bad angel. A fallen angel!”

“Idiot! You think you’re so smart, shut up!”

Such was the exchange between the three of them in the empty room.



Kagali was impressed by the grandeur of the castle as she entered.

The castle that she had given to Clayman was a reminder that she had not yet achieved the level of luxury she had hoped for. The royal castle she had lived in so long ago seemed so shabby compared to this.

“It’s wonderful.”

“Of course it is. This castle is where Veldanava-sama resides.”

Not expecting a response, Kagali changed her opinion of Zalario.

It seems that he is surprisingly conversant.

While she was thinking about this, they arrived at their destination.

It was a room with two large culture tanks.

It had the appearance of a laboratory.

There were five men and five women surrounding one of the culture tanks.

Floating in the middle of them was something in the shape of a person.

Upon closer inspection, it resembled Vega.

Noticing Zalario’s presence, everyone turned around and bowed.

A man greeted them on behalf of the group.

“Zalario-sama, welcome back.”

The man’s name was Dhalis.

Strictly speaking, phantoms had no gender, but he was a confidant who had served Zalario as a man since the original cherub era.

Zalario nodded lightly and told him the matter at hand.

“The plan is canceled.”

“Understood.”

Dhalis didn’t ask why. He believed that whatever Zalario said was right, and that they should just follow him.

This was the reason why the angelic ego was regarded as weak. That is why they were so easily influenced by the encroachment of Vega.

“I have given you a name, but it may have been meaningless.”

“I’m sorry, sir. Am I in any way at fault here?”

“No, you are not at fault. It’s just that I expected too much.”

Zalario would do his best, but he did not expect every result to be perfect. He was working to accurately evaluate the confirmed results and apply them to the future.

Therefore, no matter what the outcome, his emotions would not be shaken.

Dhalis was afraid of Zalario's disappointment.  
So, despite his regrets, he followed Zalario's words.  
He ordered his subordinates, Gnome and Berne<sup>45</sup>, to stop the incubator.  
Nice, who is the equal of Dhalis, had no objections and had her subordinates, Bem<sup>46</sup> and Sun, help her.

Incidentally, Dhalis was male and Nice was female.  
The others, like Gnome, were former throne angels, so they did not have a definite gender. However, as Zalario said, they had recently acquired "names," and their personalities had become distinctive. This had given them their individuality, but it was still developing.

It seems that one of the subordinates of the "Three Phantom Commanders" Cornu, who was the same rank as Zalario, was possessed by a native of the invaded area and lost the initiative. It is believed that this was due to a weak ego, and as a countermeasure, only the former angelic leaders were given names.

However, several decades had passed since then, and Zalario believed that even then, the changes were so slight that no further growth could be expected.

That was why he was looking for suitable mediums for possession.  
*—I had thought the idea of cultivating Vega's body was a good one, but the cells themselves were covered with evil. In that case, there is no choice but to use the undead elves that were created...*

There were nine of them.  
That was enough for the current leaders.  
However, Feldway was planning to ask Michael to use the 'Army of Angels, Armageddon' to further increase his strength. The plan was not to summon countless angels, but to concentrate his energy to create several pillars of seraphim.

That's what the undead elves are for.  
Zalario's subordinates, even his confidant Dhalis, were only second in rank. The undead elf should have been used only for the seraphim, in order to gather a large and unshakable force.  
*Oh well. We don't know how many pillars we can summon, so there's no rush. I'll talk to Feldway about this later.*

Zalario thought about it and was about to leave the place.  
But then, he heard the sound of shattering glass.  
The culture tank had been destroyed.  
"Wait! I'll never forgive you for ripping my arm off! It's you, I'll get it back!!"  
With the device shut down, Vega woke up and began to move.  
And his target was Gnome, who had fused with Vega's cells.  
"Gubuh, gugugu—gupah..."  
Before anyone could stop him, Vega's arm grabbed Gnome. Then the fusion began, and Gnome was absorbed by Vega.

<sup>45</sup>"ベルン," or "Berne." It might also be "Bern" or "Berun" or "Vern" depending on how you hear it.

<sup>46</sup>"ベム," or "Bem." It can also be pronounced "Bemu." This is similar, but a different name from Bern.

“Oh, that’s delicious! My power is getting stronger!!”

Vega was delighted.

He sensed that the Gnome guy he had absorbed had a huge amount of magicules, and that it had boosted his strength.

“Kukakakakaka! This guy is good. Now, I can take any bastard I want—Uh?!”

Vega’s climax ended the moment he locked eyes with Zalario.

“I’ve heard a lot about you. You can either join us, or you can stay here and fight.”

Vega was asked this question, but he already knew his answer.

“Heh, sorry. I got carried away. Of course, I’ll follow you.”

That kind of filthiness was quite impressive at this point.

Zalario was not dismayed, as this attitude was within expectations. He knew it, and accepted it.

The loss of Gnome was unfortunate, but it did help to strengthen Vega.

What was needed for the future battles was not an army, but individual heroes. The more powerful allies they had, the better.

Besides, Gnome had just lost his ego, so his value as a pawn had diminished. In fact, it was better for him to become Vega’s ally here.

Zalario was cruel and ruthless to his subordinates who had served him since long ago, but that was just his true nature.

The others had no problem with it as long as it was Zalario’s decision.

Vega’s outburst was forgiven, and he was treated as one of them.

Kagali, who was watching the whole thing, could not help but feel disgusted.

Vega’s attitude was horrible, but it was hard to understand what kind of thought process Zalario had, who had tolerated it so easily.

She couldn’t read Zalario’s thoughts because he didn’t seem to be similar to Yuuki.

Yuuki was well aware of the dangers of Vega and handled him well. But Zalario—

*Zalario, on the other hand, probably doesn’t even think Vega is dangerous. Does that mean he is that much more capable?*

Kagali judged that from the situation, she was correct.

Zalario did not even care about the current Vega. Even his own subordinates were only slightly useful tools.

But this was not arrogance.

It was not arrogance, because Zalario’s perception was correct.

Zalario’s nature of grasping information correctly was far from arrogance. Kagali, however, could not possibly understand such a thing, and was left confused.

“Hey, Kagali, isn’t it? And Yuuki wasn’t like that either. Well, we’re old friends, so let’s get along.”

Kagali was noticed by Vega who called out to her.

There’s no way that the current Kagali can beat Vega. Besides, even if Teare and Footman

had challenged Vega, the odds would have been about 50-50. Since Yuuki was still deprived of his free will, she decided that it would be best to just stay in line.

“Right. Our circumstances have changed a lot, so let’s continue to get along.”

“Oh, yeah. Anyway, where am I? Where are we?”

“It’s called the ‘Heavenly Star Palace.’ It looks like there’s no way to escape, so we’ll just have to obey those people.”

“I see. Well, I don’t need to run away. I’m sure they’ll need my help anyway, so I’ll just enjoy the situation.”

Kagali envied Vega’s simplicity.

Zalario didn’t seem to like it, but the intentions of those controlling Yuuki were unknown.

Kagali thought that the Dead Birthday spell would be a trump card for her and the others, but she was not sure about that, either.

In the first place, a ritual that required tens of thousands of corpses was not something that could be easily handled.

*We need to make them think we’re useful somehow. If worse comes to worst, we’ll survive even if we have to flatter them.*

Kagali thought as such.

It was out of the question to abandon their ambitions after all this time. She had decided that now was the time for surrender, and was ready to throw away her pride.

And that resolve would soon be put to the test.

Michael and Feldway had returned.

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In the center of the castle, there was an audience hall.

There was no one on the throne. It had been empty for a long time.

Chairs were arranged in the hall, and people were sitting as they pleased.

Michael was seated in the chair closest to the throne. Standing next to him was Feldway, staring at the gathered people.

In addition to Zalario and the others, Kagali’s group was also there.

Dino and his group came without skipping a beat.

The newborn undead elves had also been brought there.

And that wasn’t all.

Obera and her confidant from the Palace of Monsters had also been summoned.

Obera had only one confidant, named Oma.

The others were killed in the battle against the cryptids. As you can see from this, Obera is the one who was in charge of the toughest battlefield.

Oma had lost both her eyes when she became a youma<sup>47</sup>, but instead she had a single eye that could see everything. Her mouth had been sewn shut, and she communicated only by ‘telepathy,’ not with words.

Despite her eerie appearance, she was a former cherub and a veteran warrior who had followed Obera for a long time.

Obera and the others were not the only ones Feldway brought.

There was the Insectar, with whom he had fought for what seemed like an eternity, and with whom he was now in an alliance with.

Insect Lord Zelanus, and the Twelve Insect Generals, who were his confidants, had gathered together.

However, there were only eight of them now, not twelve.

One of the missing members was Razul, the guardian god of the West. He invaded the Cardinal World more than two thousand years ago under the command of Zelanus, but betrayed him and became an ally of the Chosen Hero Granbell. He was a bug-type majin (insectar) who had been defeated by Shion and Ranga.

The other was Minaza., who was sent by Zelanus to help Emperor Rudra after he was promised half the world. He had also been defeated by Shion, though by a strange coincidence.

There other two were escaped larvae born of the replacement. One of them was also a direct descendant of Zelanus, so a secret search order had been issued...It was still missing.

Each of the eight currently present, like Razul and Minaza, had a fighting ability comparable to that of an awakened demon lord.

Among them, Zess, a direct descendant of Zelanus and the commander of the bug-generals, boasted a strength that set him apart from the others. He was Zalaro’s rival, and they had competed with each other to the death.

The strength of the remaining seven was on a par with the others.

Beathop, who had the characteristics of a bee and a grasshopper.

Mujika, who looked like an anthropomorphic centipede.

Tishorn who was like a mantis.

Torun, a dragonfly with wings.

Abart, with spider-like limbs on his back.

Saril, a venomous scorpion.

Peliod, beautiful as a damselfly.

All of them with their own peculiarities were standing in silence, not even sitting on chairs.

It was a large room, but the oppressive feeling made it seem smaller.

Kagali was afraid, but decided to let things happen as they would.

After everyone had been assembled, the meeting with Michael began.

“Gentlemen. With Rudra gone, Michael-sama is free. And as a first step towards Veldanava-sama’s resurrection, we have succeeded in expelling Velgrynd. The plan is now—”

<sup>47</sup>“妖魔。” Possible translations are demon or ghost or apparition.

At that moment, Zalario stepped forward to speak. Normally, he would not interrupt his superior Feldway, but this time he decided that it was urgent.

“Feldway-sama, please hold. It seems that there is a difference in perception.”

Feldway was in a good mood, but his smile disappeared at Zalario’s words.

“What?”

He became a little sullen and asked.

“Velgrynd is alive and well. And because of her, Cornu has been destroyed.”

“ “ “...?!” ” ”

Even Zelanus twitched at this remark.

Feldway frowned in displeasure.

The Demon Lord Rimuru was an annoying new interloper, but the plan had gone well. Guy Crimson and Rimuru Tempest would both be obstacles, but Veldanava’s resurrection was still imminent.

Of the three remaining “True Dragons” on Earth, Velgrynd’s dragon factor had been obtained, and he was ready to obtain the other two.

However, if Zalario’s words were true, it meant that there would be a major deviation from the plan.

And, as if to confirm his words, Cornu’s presence had disappeared. His presence was nowhere to be found, neither here at the ‘Heavenly Star Palace,’ nor in the Palace of Monsters in the Otherworld.

“Are you sure?”

“It’s true. Because of Cornu’s disappearance, the plan failed. We had no choice but to retreat. I didn’t think your plan would fail, but I guess the blame lies with your ineptitude, right?”

It was Dino, not Zalario, who answered. Dino was more tactful than Zalario in that he even shifted the blame for the failure of the plan.

Zalario tacitly accepted it.

He didn’t think that Dino’s opinion was correct, but he also didn’t think it was necessary to deny it. Zalario, who was fair-minded and strict with himself, could be flexible.

With such a reaction from both of them, Feldway had no choice but to stop doubting.

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Unexpectedly, Feldway was in a foul mood.

However, his mind was clear and he quickly devised a countermeasure.

The first thing to do was to secure a ‘True Dragon.’

Since the Dragon Factor was essential to Veldanava’s resurrection, it was only natural that this would be the first priority.

Fortunately, Velgrynd’s dragon factor had already been secured.

Although he hadn’t expected to come back to this world, it wasn’t the worst situation. Still,

it was a rather painful mistake.

*I was careless. I retrieved the skill because it was going to disappear anyway, but as a result, the “control circuit” also disappeared. I banished her to the far side of time and space so that she would not be an enemy even if he resurrected, but now I have increased the number of troublesome enemies...*

At that time, Velgrynd had lost most of her power. On top of that, the Dragon Factor had been taken from her, and she was on the verge of disappearing.

That's why Michael retrieved the ‘Charity King Raguel,’ but there was no way he could have predicted that this would lead to the destruction of Cornu.

*Never mind. As long as Veldanava-sama is resurrected, the rest is not important. Let's leave the Velgrynd matter alone and have Velzard join us first.*

This time, he would careful not to make her disappear, and let her join with some free will. This would help against Velgrynd, and would also help them capture Veldora.

Once they had Velzard in the group, what would they do next?

He had planned to go after Veldora right away, but now needed to reconsider this.

*If we're going to be facing Velgrynd as well, we'd better get our forces up to speed. I thought that Michael and I could handle it, but you can never be too careful.*

Dino had just told him that he wasn't thinking clearly.

That's why Feldway decided to drastically change his original plan.

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“In that case, it seems we need to take immediate action. Let's take Velzard in first. This time, let's not banish her to the far reaches of space-time and instead use her as an ally.”

“There is no other choice. It would be more prudent to eliminate as many uncertainties as possible and begin the final ritual once the three True Dragons have been captured.”

Michael nodded in agreement with Feldway's words.

Velzard was given the Ultimate Skill ‘Patience King Gabriel’ by Veldanava. In other words, since the “Control Circuit” was active, she could be added to the team safely and reliably.

The problem was what happened after that.

Michael's eyes scanned over the group.

“I didn't think it was necessary, but we should incarnate them all. That way, we can deal with whatever happens.”

“Indeed. Let's leave Veldora for later and finish all possible preparations first.”

The conversation between Feldway and Michael progressed, and a conclusion was reached.

In anticipation of this, Zalario made a report.

“On that note, I have something to report.”

“What is it?”

“The attempt to incarnate using Vega there has failed. The only surefire way is to possess the undead elf.”

“Hmm. So then nine people. It’s a little difficult to decide who to incarnate...”

So Feldway pondered.

Here’s what Zelanus had to say.

“Do what you want with those undead elves. We don’t need them.”

In the event of an emergency, the insectars were able to create bodies that looked like solidified magicles. That’s why they can enter any world.

While it would be useful to have the undead elves, it was not necessary.

In fact, that is what happened with Minaza.

She took in the materials of that world and incarnated them, and the insectoids she summoned had been confirmed to have the same properties.

This is why while it was difficult to cross worlds, once they had crossed over to another world, they were able to fully exercise their unrivaled power.

This time, the problem of “crossing worlds” had been solved.

It was natural for Zelanus to give in.

If he didn’t need to consider his allies, he could choose from among the phantoms.

In that case, the right choice would be to choose the strongest and most useful.

“Zalario and Obera, of the “Three Phantom Commanders,” will be chosen. Shall we fill the remaining seven positions with the executives?”

“I have an opinion on that as well.”

“You’re welcome to speak freely.”

“Thank you.”

Seeing this, Dino thought to himself, ‘Zalario is a serious man, unlike me.’

With permission, Zalario spoke up.

“Unlike us Primordials<sup>48</sup>, those below the cherubs are weak-willed. In the other world, they would be able to fight by force, but in the future, I’m afraid that we won’t be able to count on them as a fighting force.”

“Hmm. Then what do you suggest?”

“Yes. Rather, why don’t we leave the race for survival in the hands of nature?”

Zalario had abandoned his subordinates.

As was the case with Cornu’s men, they had been taken over by the humans who had possessed them in the other world when they had invaded, and had thus lost their sense of self.

And now, under the influence of Vega’s cells, their emotions were running wild. It was unlikely that giving such people a valuable substitute would help them in the coming battle.

“There are still many who stand in our way. Velgrynd, Veldora, and the demon lords are still alive. Even those damned demons will interfere, those tools that do nothing more than follow orders—”

“Not worth it.”

“By your will.”

<sup>48</sup>“Shigen (始原),” or “Firstborns/Originals.

In response to Zalario's statement, Feldway nodded, for he too was concerned about the same thing.

*Yes. What matters is the strength of will. If one doesn't have a strong enough desire, giving them an Ultimate Skill is meaningless. To put it another way...*

No matter how strong the ego was, there was no need to worry about betrayal if he gave them the Ultimate Enchantment 'Alternative.'

Feldway looked at Michael, and their gazes met. Apparently, he had another opinion.

"What is your opinion?"

"I was going to call in the seraphim and possess them with the all-powerful 'Army of Angels, Armageddon.'"

"That's fine, but we don't know how many can be called, or what kind of will they'll possess, do we?"

"Seven at most can be called. But whether the seraphim have a will or not is something we won't know until we summon them."

If an undead elf possesses a seraphim, it will be more powerful than an awakened demon lord. However, its strength of will was something to worry about.

As was the case with themselves, it took many years for their egos to be established.

Feldway's conclusion was that a hastily developed force would be useless.

Here is what Zelanus had to say.

"Interesting. If you have any seraphim left over, why don't I or my children eat them?"

"Hmm..."

Feldway thought about this as well.

They were currently in a collaborative relationship because their interests were aligned. As soon as one of them achieved their goals, there was a good chance they'd go back to being adversaries.

He hesitated to reinforce such an opponent, but it would be an effective strategy to ruin the world.

"That'll be put on hold. We'll think about it then."

"Understood. I'm not saying you have to."

The conversation about the seraphim was postponed and they returned to the question of who should incarnate.

"Then, after all, we should use Zalario as a reincarnation."

"Well, that's fine. Feldway is right about eliminating uncertainties."

"No objections."

Thus, both sides agreed.

"We'll go with Zalario's idea. Are you okay with that?"

Feldway asked his group.

It was posed as a question, but the decision was already made. There was no way that Dhalis and the others could argue with him, since they would be considered weak if they objected.

Thus, it was decided that Zalario and the others would possess the undead elves, and at the

same time, unleash the wills that resided in their bodies.



With the decision made, the incarnation ceremony began.

This time, the incarnation would be performed by Zalario and five of his subordinates. Also Obera and Oma.

Kagali would be in charge of imbuing the undead elf with an ego.

*What are they going to do with the extra one?*

When Kagali wondered this, her eyes met Feldway's.

“It’s Kagali, isn’t it? Kondou’s death seems to have broken your hold, but what are you planning to do about it?”

‘This is it,’ Kagali braced herself.

“Will you let me go?”

Kagali asked cautiously, unsure of how much was allowed to be said. There was a surprising response.

“After this ritual is over, I don’t mind.”

“What?”

“If that’s the case, your role will be finished once you have created the undead elves as a substitute. You’ve done enough good, so if you want, I’ll send you back to earth.”

‘No way,’ Kagali thought, confused.

At best, she thought she’d be locked up. At worst, she was prepared to be punished.

And yet, she was allowed to escape.

There was no lie in Feldway’s words. As such, there was no need for a complicated negotiation.

The difference in power was so obvious that Kagali was of no use to him. Kagali couldn’t think of any reason to deceive such a person, so she thought it safe to assume that his words were true.

In that case, Kagali treaded on thin ice as she made her next request.

“Is it possible for you to break Yuuki-sama’s control and let us go with him?”

It was Michael who answered that question.

“I can’t allow that. Because the ‘Ultimate Skill ‘Greedy King Mammon’ owned by Yuuki Kagurazaka is also beneficial to me.”

For Michael, Yuuki’s power was of great use, regardless of his personal fighting ability. Therefore, he rejected the idea of releasing him.

Kagali, understanding this, stopped wishing for more.

*What should I do? Is it okay to run away?*

Feldway added on to Kagali.

"If it's just you and the two of them, I can send you all back. However, the Cardinal World will be rough. I hate the people on Earth. Not that I need the death of every living thing to achieve my goal, but it will inevitably be engulfed in flames in a war with those who stand in our way. But that is the punishment. Those whom Veldanava-sama loved have betrayed that love. Sanctions will be necessary."

Kagali felt a chill run down her spine as his words were spoken so plainly.

To be engulfed in flames would mean that the whole world would be affected by the war. In that case, it was hard to say that the place they escaped to would be safe.

Yuuki was still under their control, and if the absolute powerhouses here went on a rampage, there would be no safe place on earth.

'In the first place...' Kagali thought.

*We wanted to create a country where we could live happily, but it would be too vain to hope for that under these circumstances. In this situation, the most important thing is to survive. And to do that, we need power—*

It might have been a foolish decision.

But at the time, it seemed to Kagali that this was the only correct answer.

That's why—she stated what she wished.

"Please give me an undead elf, and hopefully, allow me to carry a seraphim in this body—" Kagali wished.

She hoped to abandon her fragile body and be reborn as an undead elf. Then, she would take in the seraphim and gain great power.

She needed power.

Because if you have power, nothing more can be taken from you.

Kagali's words had no chance of winning, but no one argued with her.

Dino had a dumbfounded expression, but said nothing.

Zalaro and Obera only followed Michael's decision.

And the insectar was indifferent. He was not interested in the weak.

In the midst of these reactions, Michael nodded.

"Hmm, interesting. But I will not tolerate betrayal. If you accept my Ultimate Enchantment, I will grant you your wish."

"I swear I will not betray you. And I will accept your dominion."

The deal was made.

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To make an undead elf develop an ego was equivalent to awakening its original personality. In some cases, the strongest will prevails, while in other cases, a new ego is born from a mixture of the two. Even for Kagali, the outcome was unknown. As one could see from Teare and Footman, it was difficult to invoke a targeted personality. So even Kagali herself had to gamble

whether her ego would win or not.

But even so, she knew she had to obtain the power. So, after awakening the eight egos, she performed an awakening ritual on her own undead elf. After that, she escaped from the homunculus and transferred into the undead elf.

Thus, the ritual ended. As was expected, the result was—

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Obera awoke. She is a testament to the pride in her heart that her noble will is one that no one can defeat.

As Dhalis was about to awaken, he realized that Zalario had awakened. He realized that he was wrapped in an armor of flesh and that he could wield great power in the Cardinal World. There was another person inside him. His name was Torneot, and he was a man of great ambition. He felt that his skills as a warrior had become his own, and he was convinced that Dhalis himself had greatly increased his presence.

Nice awoke. She became stronger under his command, but she was no different. Her powerful ego was still intact.

Grandma awoke. With her indomitable will still intact, she embraced a being with a similar set of sensibilities. Zero, now consumed, became Oma's flesh and blood.

Then Orca-Aria awoke. With Aria's knowledge as a wizard and Orca's strength as a warrior. Their two egos coexisted and they were reborn as a magical warrior. Not a trace of their former selves remained.

Arios woke up, his Unique Skill 'Murderer' was still intact. He had not forgotten the grudge of being killed by Damrada and was resurrected to seek greater strength.

Mai Furuki woke up. She refused to die because she had left her sickly brother behind, not here, but in the world beyond, in the world she was meant to live in. So she vowed to return.

And so, eight people had risen. Only one remained.

But she was still in a deep sleep...



Kagali was dreaming.

It was so, so long ago.

A dream from when she was still Demon Lord Kazalim?

No.

It was a dream from much, much earlier, when she was just a girl.

She can't even remember her name now, but Kagali was a happy princess.

Kagali's country was founded on the site where 'high humans' had built a great civilization. It was a paradise for the elf race, a magical superpower that was flourishing thanks to the flowing rivers, lush forests, rich plains, and the ruins of the ancient magical empire.

But then—her father, the king, suddenly went mad.

Kagali remembered him as a very kind and gentle man.

Even so—

One day, the king who had been praised as the king of the high elves, suddenly changed into a different person. He changed his name, and began to call himself Jahil, the Great Magician.

Her memory of what happened after that was not clear.

Jahil committed tyranny to the utmost.

He exploited his people and sought only his own glory.

He repeated his foolish experiments and created all sorts of nightmares.

Kagali was one of those who had fallen victim to this.

Kagali, a high elf, was stripped of her powers.

She was killed and brought back to life as an undead elf.

At that time, she was given an ugly appearance and the name "Kazalim."

Her beautiful appearance was gone, and she became a cursed figure.

Rotten flesh covered her bones. It was so dry that it did not smell of decay, though perhaps that was for the best.

Few people knew the secret.

Kagali was so grieved that she began to cover herself with a mask.

"Why are you doing this to meee?!"

"Gera-gera-gera-gera! Because it's funny. Be happy. Tens of thousands of people died to bring you back to life! Gera-gera-gera-gera!!"

It was a nightmare.

She didn't know how her father, who was so kind, had become such a fiend. But because it was real, there was no point in lamenting.

"Father! I don't care what you do with me. But please think of the people like you used to—"

"Shut up! Are you ridiculing me as well? My daughter is no good to me after all. I can't afford to make the same mistake as her. I have instilled my loyalty, but you can't be trusted! Kazalim, today you will be a man. Do you understand?"

It was an absolute command.

Kagali's words never reached 'his'<sup>49</sup> father, Jahil, and the conversation was cut short.

She was lucky that she had not been killed—no, it was only because she had already been killed and turned into a faithful puppet that she had not been discarded to be used as a tool.

It was then that Kagali parted ways with her father.

<sup>49</sup>Not 100% this was right, but it might have temporarily switched to using male pronouns because of Jahil's order. It switched back to female soon after though. In general, I've chosen to stay with the female pronouns whenever it's Kagali's perspective. I can use male ones if it's Kazalim though.

Then, the nightmare continued.

The glory of the arrogant Jahil, the Great Magician, seemed to know no bounds, but the end eventually came.

The reason for this was his foolish attempt to make a puppet of the Dragon Empress Milim which incurred her wrath.

‘Soma,’ the super magic capital, fell into ruins overnight.

It was not known whether Jahil was dead or alive.

It was presumed that he was dead, as it was unlikely that he could have survived that flash of light. So Kagali thought more about the people who were important to her than about the dead man.

The maidservants who had always looked after her with kindness.

The knights who followed her after she became a warrior.

Her beloved people who lived happily ever after.

Thinking of those she loved, she invoked the forbidden spell.

The forbidden spell: Dead Birthday—she had already learned the theory of the spell by becoming a test subject herself.

The spell was perfected, and Teare, Footman, and Clayman were born.

They were lovely, sweet children, all named by Kagali.

And in doing so, she learned a fact she did not want to know.

The undead elves created by her spell were not ugly at all. Only Kagali was made ugly on purpose to be so.

That hateful father, King Jahil, had taken away her beauty just to make Kagali suffer.

Even if she knew that, it was already too late for her to do anything.

Kagali’s appearance was the result of a curse, and there was no way to restore it.

However, the children that Kagali had created did not leave her alone. They, too, hid their true faces with masks and shared Kagali’s suffering.

Kagali was not alone, and the hope for survival grew within her.

The four of them were then joined by the elf tribes that had survived in various places.

—Let us rebuild our own country once again. And then, create a country where everyone can live happily—

Kagali secretly made up her mind to do so.

However, that would become a faint and fleeting dream.

The Chaos Dragon attacked and contaminated the land. As a result, all those who adored Kagali were cursed and turned into dark elves.

At that time, Kagali also acted as if she was cursed. Kagali and Teare were able to endure the curse because they were undead elves...but they recognized themselves and lamented that they were different from everyone else.

It was fortunate that she had been hiding her true face with a mask and no one noticed her,

but it made her even more sad.

Teare's presence was the only thing that saved her.

After that, Kagali and her friends abandoned their homeland and fled. Even though they had some regrets, they left together.

They wandered around, and finally found their next safe haven.

When everyone's lives had stabilized, Kagali decided to visit her homeland again.

She needed to recover the treasures she had left behind, but more than anything, she wanted to see her homeland again.

The city had perished, but it still shone beautifully in her memories. She decided that she had to cut off her regrets and use them as food for the future.

And so, she set off, and on her way, she met a man.

"What, you...If you were watching me, you could have helped me, right?"

"Don't be stupid. Someone like me is no match for that evil dragon."

"You're being too modest. From my point of view, you look like trouble enough...Ouch—"

The man's name was Sarion Grimwald—the Chosen Hero who drove away the Chaos Dragon from this land.

Unfortunately, he was dying from mortal combat with the Chaos Dragon.

"Don't push yourself. Now, the restoration magic—"

"It's useless, so don't do it. The Chaos Dragon's attacks are cursed, and my wounds won't heal. I had prepared several means of recovery, but this is how it is."

In fact, Sarion was blown from the chest down, and it was a miracle he was even still alive. The fact that he could afford to laugh despite this, showed that he had a tremendous mental capacity.

"I need you to pass on a message. I'm here to tell you that I defeated Chaos Dragon and died in style just like a Chosen Hero—"

"Huh, what Chosen Hero? Before you die, I have a proposal. With my evil ways, there is a chance you can survive. You may lose your memory, you may end up like this, but are you willing to give it a try?"

With that, Kagali took off her mask.

What he saw was her ugly face. But seeing that, Sarion smiled wryly.

"What's with you? You've got a good point though. If I just died here, Silvia would kill me. Considering that, this offer is the best thing that could happen to me!"

"Are you sure? I'm cursed. I'm willing to do evil rather than be persecuted. If you're a Chosen Hero, I am prepared to become a demon lord and protect everyone. Besides, if you use this evil method, you'll become my puppet, right?"

"I don't care, I don't care, it's interesting. I'm a free man, and I am not going to be easily controlled. Besides, there is always a cause and effect between a Chosen Hero and a demon lord. That's how you and I came to be, isn't it?"

"You're an interesting guy, talking nonsense at this point. Then, you can be my puppet!"

Negotiations were concluded.

Kagali took Sarion's words as a joke, but they were true. And as a result of this whim, Sarion became undead himself and survived.

That was the moment when "Curse Lord" Kazalim and "Wonder Pierrot" Laplace were born.

Since then, many things had happened.

Securing the dominant territory. The war against humans and demi-humans was fierce, but she overcame persecution and emerged as "Curse Lord" Kazalim.

He was recognized as one of the demon lords, and steadily expanded his power.

He recommended Karion, the Beast Master, and Frey, the Sky Queen, as demon lords, and formed a powerful alliance with them.

Everything was going well.

So much so that he didn't realize that he had grown complacent.

Kagali next set her sights on an up-and-coming man named Leon. The plan was to teach Leon, who called himself a demon lord in the middle of nowhere, a lesson in humility and bring him under control.

The moment she saw him, Kagali felt a pang of jealousy.

This man who called himself a demon lord, Leon, was too beautiful.

She had become disfigured by her demon father, the king. She had been deprived of her gender and had been struggling to live—The appearance of Leon, who was a man, yet more beautiful than a woman, slowed down her thinking, and Kagali made the great mistake of misjudging her opponent's strength.

Kagali lost her body to Leon's blow, and was forced to wander around with only her spiritual body.

It was a miracle that she did not disappear.

She had a grudge.

But more than that, she had a desire.

So Kagali clung to life.

Using what little power she had left as the Curse Lord, she took the time to prepare for her own resurrection.

Then, in a daze, she made one last summoning attempt—unconsciously failing to take over. Her plan failed and she gained no flesh.

The rest was destroyed.

"Help me. Save me. I don't want to be taken from you. All I want is to live happily with my friends, but why am I alone in this?"

She lamented her misfortune and asked for help, but no one answered her.

Kagali was not alone, but no one helped her.

It was a journey of hardship.

Ideals were far away and Kagali was the leader of the pack.

There was no room for whining, and she had to always look forward.

So Kagali had given up hope of being saved.

The only people she could trust were herself and her beloved friends. That is how she had lived her life.

But that boy—Yuuki Kagurazaka, he—

“All right. You seem to be tired, so rest inside me for now.”

“...?!”

Yuuki Kagurazaka reached out to Kagali, who had tried to take his life, and to whom no one had ever saved.

A few years later—

Kagali spent the next few years resting inside Yuuki, consulting and advising him.

It was fortunate that the Unique Skill ‘Schemer’ was a skill that could be used by souls alone, but there were still many troublesome opponents.

In particular, a girl named Mariabell Rosso was extremely troublesome.

Yuuki was a genius strategist, and Kagali was confident in his own intelligence. But even with cooperation and scheming of these two, it was extremely difficult to outsmart Mariabell.

They were outmatched in every aspect, including financial and human resources. Even if they gained an organization to free themselves, Mariabell would grasp the right to free it.

“I’ll kill her. If we don’t get rid of her someday, our plan will fail.”

“I’m sure of it. That demon in a girl’s skin is the biggest obstacle for us.”

A battle in the economic sphere cannot be won or lost based on simple combat ability alone.

She was a child, but was still like that. When Mariabell grew up and became an adult, they would not be able to compete in every aspect.

A few years had passed since the two of them had made such a decision, and a time for change had arrived.

The birth of the mysterious slime, Demon Lord Rimuru—was not it.

Kagali, who had been inside Yuuki, had finally taken on the body of a homunculus.

Yuuki had kept his promise.

Moreover—

*This is my original form.*

Yuuki’s kindness made Kagali so happy that she wanted to cry, but she kept a cool expression on her face. She tried to maintain her masculine tone, but Laplace stopped her. He was pretending to be teasing Kagali, but was actually really looking out for her.

“I appreciate it, boss.”

Kagali thanked him from the bottom of her heart.

Now that she had a physical body, Kagali could look forward to delicious meals and desserts.

The cream puffs were especially delicious.

Spending a happy time with friends, laughing. How happy they were!

However, that happiness did not last long.

Clayman was dead.

With the loss of another precious friend, Kagali realized—Kagali and the others realized once again.

For the sake of their own happiness, they must conquer the world.

To become the rulers of this world and lead it correctly.

*Stupid, arrogant, and cute Clayman. I'm sorry you had to go through that. Rest now and watch over us. We will make our ambitions come true.*

Kagali and the others were not on the side of justice, but they were not evil, either.

They were moderate.

That is why they should be able to create a world where everyone can live happily.

Believing this, they continued their activities.

They defeated Mariabell, were exposed by Demon Lord Rimuru, escaped to the Empire, and were taken over by Lieutenant Kondou.

Even Yuuki was also taken over.

Kagali's heart was about to break, but she could not give up now.

"I swear I will not betray you. And I will accept your dominion."

A contract must be fulfilled, and the benefits received must be returned.

So Kagali was willing to use any means necessary.

And so, Kagali wakes up—

Leaving behind the fragile body of a homunculus and regaining the body of an undead elf, she was stronger and more beautiful than when 'he' was Demon Lord Kazalim.

Thus, nine undead elves were born.

But this was only the beginning.

When Kagali finally awoke, she saw Feldway and the others had brought Velzard back.

Michael intended to take the 'Dragon Factor' from Velzard for further evolution, but before that, he used the 'Army of Angels, Armageddon' to implant in Kagali and the others.

She was determined not to compromise.

The seven seraphim were successfully summoned.

Those who were willing to incarnate were selected from those who were not former angels.

Kagali was naturally chosen as one of them.

The others were Teare, Footman, Vega, Orca-Aria, Arios, and Mai Furuki.

Their bodies were reborn as the tremendous powers clashed within their body.

Thus Kagali and the others, with the exception of Vega, were reborn as "Yōten" (Heavenly Spirits)<sup>50</sup>.

And so it was that five months had passed since Kagali had arrived at the 'Heavenly Star

<sup>50</sup>It's pronounced "Yōten." The Chinese character "妖" can mean many things from spirit, to demon/devil, to ghost, etc. and the Chinese character "天" means heaven/sky. So I just temporarily translated as "Heavenly Spirit," until official translators choose something else.

Palace'—



A vast heavenly castle.

Chalk pillars lined up in the audience hall.

The hall was filled with a divine atmosphere.

Angels with pure white wings filled the hall.

They were still without bodies, but were waiting for the time to invade the earth.

Because they had no will, they did not move at all, and because they were as unsteady as sculptures, it created a solemn atmosphere in the audience hall.

In the front row, chairs were lined up, and those who stood out from the rest sat in a circle.

They were Kagali and the others who had been reborn.

They were much more powerful compared to before, and their presence was much stronger.

Michael was about to wake up, so they were called.

When Kagali reawakened with the seraphim in her body, Michael was still asleep.

However, he had not shown up yet, and it seemed that he was behind schedule.

Kagali, who had time to spare, turned her attention to the angels.

She was told that there was no limit to the number of angels that could be summoned at once, but there was a limit to the total amount of energy. Normally, it would be an army of a million, but this time there were seven seraphim summoned, so the number itself was not large.

However, the quality was high.

The group was composed only of angels of intermediate level and above, with no low-level angels of any kind.

The approximate numbers were 1,000 dominion angels, 3,000 virtue angels, and 6,000 power angels.

Angels that had not incarnated could not display their full power. But even so, even the fighting ability of the power angels was Over A rank. The limit of activity was seven days, but it was enough strength to scorch the earth.

*—But the demon lords would be able to handle it.*

That's what Kagali thought.

"It's not enough. With only this much, it's going to be difficult to take out any of the forces."

Kagali's murmur echoed in the silent hall.

Although she hadn't been expecting an answer, she got one.

"Well. I didn't have any subordinates, but everyone else had strong ones. To be honest, I doubt if I can defeat one of the eight stars (Octagram)."

Kagali turned to look at the speaker.

“I never thought I’d agree with you. Oh, by the way, Dino. I never knew you worked for Feldway-sama, so do you?”

Kagali whispered quietly.

Dino replied matter-of-factly.

“I can’t tell you that. I’m a “watcher.” The whole point is to keep a low profile. And while I’m at it, let me correct your mistake. I am a former associate of Feldway’s, not a subordinate.”

Dino had infiltrated the Octagram and was working as a “watcher.” His purpose was to monitor the earth.

Dino, Pico, and Gracia, the three Fallen Angels, were sent on a special mission to investigate the human world. By the will of Veldanava, they were charged with monitoring the human race so that it would not be destroyed.

The role of the demon lords, led by Guy, was to rebuke the human race when it grew too much. And to prevent demon lords from going too far, the Chosen Hero existed as a deterrent.

It was Dino’s role to investigate whether the causal relationship between demon lords and heroes was working properly.

While Dino attracted attention with his prominent position as a demon lord, Pico and Gracia conducted their investigation without falling into the spotlight. It was also Dino’s hidden role to create a cover-up to make it easier for those two to move about.

However, now that Veldanava has not returned, there was no one to report to. Therefore, Dino had been enjoying his free life as a demon lord.

Dino had no intention of hiding that fact as he was openly talking about it.

Kagali wondered why he was even here then. Perhaps it showed on her face, so Gracia answered with a smile.

“He owes Feldway a lot of money, so he can’t say no when asked.”

Pico followed suit.

“But he can’t go back to Demon Lord Rimuru, so he’s decided to follow Michael-sama.”

No way, Kagali thought.

“Well, I guess that’s it.”

Dino nodded.

Kagali didn’t believe he was following Michael for that reason, but it was ridiculous, and Kagali agreed that it was typical of Dino.

Kagali changed her mind.

“So, what was Demon Lord Rimuru like? I have a grudge against him for killing Clayman, and I’d like to avenge him if I get the chance.”

That was a lie.

In reality, she had no grudge against Demon Lord Rimuru.

There was no doubt that they shared a history with each other. However, he had formed an alliance with Yuuki, and even if they were to become enemies again, he was still an interesting presence.

The one to blame for Clayman's death would be Lieutenant Kondou, who had controlled him, and Michael, who had even controlled Kondou.

Kagali calmly understood this, but she was not foolish enough to say it.

Dino answered Kagali's question without going any deeper.

"Even his subordinates are troublesome. Especially that Zegion guy."

In the last mission, Dino's role was to neutralize the labyrinthine forces. Specifically, his mission was to kidnap or eliminate Ramiris.

Dino claims to have come close to succeeding, but the reality is that he failed. The reason, he says, is that he was interrupted by Zegion, a powerful majin.

"Is he that strong?"

"He's not just strong. It was a level that was seriously insane. Rumor has it he's the strongest of the Dungeon's Elite Ten, so he's stronger than me at the least."

Dino affirmed.

He was tired from the long series of battles, and had underestimated his opponent a little. Zegion, on the other hand, did not even take Dino seriously and played him lightly.

Dino's true feelings were that he didn't want to be a sore loser.

"That's a weak thing to say. You can just crush him! Don't worry, I'll crush him myself!"

Vega boasted.

*It must be nice to be so stupid.*

Dino thought, but didn't say it out loud.

There was no point in saying anything.

*Vega is still the same. Like this, even if he has the power, we might not be able to use him effectively...*

Kagali sighed in exasperation.

It was all well and good to be confident in your own strength, but it's no use if you lack the most important sense in battle.

It was the ability to grasp the difference in strength between you and your opponent. Facing an unbeatable opponent will only result in losing strength unnecessarily.

Pico and Gracia seemed to understand this and frowned in displeasure.

They didn't say anything, probably because they were not close to Vega and realized that there was no point in advising him.

That appeared to be the end of the conversation—

"Well, if you guys see an insectar in the labyrinth, be careful, okay? The beetle type is Zegion, but Apito, the bee type, is dangerous too."

Zelanus took a bite out of Dino's casual remark, which was about to conclude the conversation.

"A beetle type and a bee type? Tell me more."

Dino was pressured by the tremendous spirit. And, unintentionally, he disclosed as much information as he knew, though not much.

"O-oh? Well um, I heard that they protected Rimuru before he became a demon lord—"

Zelanus was silent as he listened.

Dino's story was over, and an awkward silence was hanging in the air.

*Give me some kind of a response!*

Dino thought that Zelanus was intimidating. Since he didn't want to talk to Zelanus, he decided to change the subject and cover up the situation.

"Anyway, that's it. In Ramiris's labyrinth, the defenders have a complete advantage. There are many strong players like Zegion in there, so you should consider that it will be very difficult to defeat them!"

With that, Dino ended the conversation.



As silence reigned once again, those gathered were caught up in their own thoughts.

Kagali had a lot of things to think about.

Dino's remarks were important, but for now, the first priority was to learn about her own changes.

As Kagali was searching for information and checking her on her changes, she felt a tremendous surge of power.

The seraphim are the highest-ranking angels, said to be comparable to the awakened demon lords. Kagali, who had taken in the power of the seraphim and become a "yoten," had become so strong that her demon-lord-self seemed ridiculous.

Moreover, apart from her Unique Skill 'Schemer,' she discovered that there was a new skill embedded in her soul.

Ultimate Enchantment 'Domination King Melchizedek,' given the separation of Michael's 'control' ability, boasted a terrifying performance that could instantly analyze any ability and place it under control.

However, because Kagali herself was also under the control of the power, it became impossible for her to betray Michael.

*It's terrifying. A battle between people with such power is a world I can't even imagine...*

Those were her true feelings, but when the time came to fight, Kagali's body would slaughter the enemy on its own, without her even thinking about it. Kagali instinctively understood this and felt afraid of her own change.

However—and that's why she can't stop thinking about it.

She wanted to test the immense power she had acquired.

She knew she shouldn't think about it that way, but for some reason she still wanted to.

And—

She knows the opportunity to test it would come soon enough.  
Her thirst for revenge was supposed to be gone.  
And yet she felt anger towards Leon for killing her, and towards Rimuru for killing Clayman.  
And she wonders if she can beat them now...She knows it's pointless, but still can't stop the desire that wells up.

Was she really weaker than Dino now?  
No. She never thought so.  
In fact, the current Kagali, who had become a "Youten," was on the same level as Dino.  
*Huh, that's pathetic, Dino. He's been like that since he was a demon lord, but I never saw Dino fight himself. That's why he's weak.*

Kagali had a hard time suppressing the feeling of amusement that welled up inside of her.  
She would never be able to let her guard down.  
But still—  
Even though Dino was at the mercy of her opponent, she still felt like she could win.  
After all, Kagali's power surpassed even that of an awakened demon lord.  
Even the older demon lords, Luminas and Dino, would not be defeated by the current Kagali.  
If so, then even Demon Lord Leon should be no match for her.  
*Just wait, Leon. It's your turn to cry! You're next!*

Kagali continued to think, suppressing a faint feeling of pleasure. This was the kind of radicalized thinking that came from being ruled by a skill, but Kagali herself didn't notice...

Vega doesn't think about anything.  
He only waits for orders.  
He has gained power.  
Having experienced death so many times, he has looked into the further depths of this world.  
He ate Gladium and took in the blue dragon spear—a mythical grade and his weapon of choice. He even devoured the seraphim and made its power his own.

In that moment, he felt the fragments of the skills he had acquired fuse together and strengthen.

His countless defeats had given him strength.  
An incarnation of explosive power.  
That is who Vega is.  
Recreated by Yuuki's hands, Vega had become the ultimate combat creature as a result of incorporating, fusing, and complementing various Skills.

And finally, the Unique Skill 'Evil Eater' had evolved into the Ultimate Skill 'Evil Dragon King (Azi Dahaka),'

It had a destructive power that could overwhelm existing Skills.  
It was a disaster for the world that this Skill had gone to Vega, who had no clue about controlling power.

No, it's the opposite.

Perhaps it is because he tried to master his power without thinking that he was able to acquire such a skill.

Be that as it may...

Vega waits.

He waits for orders to come to him.

He can only annihilate and devour those who stand before him.

Dino looks down and thinks about the current situation.

How did this happen?

No matter how many times he asks himself, he is unable to find the answer.

A long time ago, he was given a role by Veldanava and came down to earth.

He didn't think he had much of an ego at the time, but at some point he was able to think for himself.

He asked his colleagues, Pico and Gracia, about it, and they seemed to have developed their own egos at almost the same time.

Various things happened, and Dino and his friends became fallen.

He became a demon lord to obey the orders of his vanished Lord, which was his only purpose in life.

Dino continued to watch.

He planned to watch the outcome of Guy and Rudra's game without intervening.

His loyalty to Veldanava was absolute.

Someday—Dino believed that one day, at the end of time, he would definitely come back.

And then they met.

That mysterious slime.

The brilliance of a soul that could be understood at a glance.

It was different from Veldanava, but it felt familiar.

And then the good days began.

He hated working, but was happy to be used by humans. Dino almost couldn't believe it, but for some reason, he felt satisfied.

Because it was there that he found friends to work together with.

*Oh, but even so, I betrayed Ramiris...*

What Dino regrets is the attack on Ramiris five months ago.

On Feldway's orders, he betrayed Rimuru and the others, and invited the enemy into the labyrinth. He then moved to capture Ramiris, the most important target.

The order was to dispose of her if she could not be captured, but Dino did not intend to do so. He really had not intended to kill her, but rather to seal her with 'Deep Hypno' and cover it up.

Fortunately or unfortunately, the attempt ended in failure.

And now, he was wondering why he had done such a thing.

*No, no. Then that's proof that he was telling the truth, I suppose.*

That's what Dino thinks.

He didn't want to make excuses for betraying Ramiris, but he was pretty sure he was under Michael's control.

*In other words, as long as I have 'Heavenly King Astarte,' I can't go against Michael or Feldway. Seriously, you've got to be kidding me...*

Although he had grasped the situation accurately, he couldn't come up with a clever idea to overcome this situation.

The saving grace was that Rimuru believed in Dino.

*He's a shrewd guy, but he's also a softie. Even if he's easily fooled, one can't be too careful with him.*

Dino suddenly sees a blue butterfly mark on his right arm.

He thought that Zegion had overlooked it, but it seems that the birthmark had become a corridor connecting his mind and heart. Thus, Rimuru was able to contact him through that mark.

*He's seriously so shrewd, that guy.*

He had spoken directly to his heart, and yet was able to steal all of his information.

Moreover, he was forcing him to spy with impunity.

But rather than feeling abhorrent or something like that, Dino felt strangely refreshed.

Surprisingly, he was happy that Rimuru believed him.

'See you later,' huh?

Dino realized that for the first time in a long time, he felt truly happy.

And then, he thought to himself, 'what a troublesome situation.'

Dino had no intention of betraying his creator, Veldanava.

If Michael and Feldway's goal was to revive Veldanava, then Dino thinks that he should cooperate with them.

However...

'This has really become troublesome'—Those were Dino's honest feelings at the moment.

*Well, whatever. I'm not of much use to them anyway. I mean, the more I work, the weaker I become, so there's nothing I can do about it. Besides, it's better for both sides if I don't work hard, so it's a wish come true!*

The good thing about Dino is that he doesn't immediately worry about things.

The always positive Dino, who was unrivaled when it came to slacking off, came to his conclusion with an easy-going mind.

This positivity was what made Dino such a frightening man.

Dino, feeling refreshed, waited for Feldway and the others with a cheerful face.

Arios thinks.

His superiors, Kagali and the others, were talking, but he had no idea what they were talking about.

He wanted to complain, but his instincts told him that it would not be a good idea.

And rightly so.

Arios was under Kagali's control. The spell was still in effect, even now when he had become a 'Yōten' (Heavenly Spirit) through the undead elf.

If he had awakened on his own, it would have been a different story, but since his evolution was a set-up, it was inevitable that the dominion would be strengthened.

Arios, who did not have the time to feel annoyed, was aware of his current situation.

Filled with incredible power, he was elated with a sense of omnipotence.

The most significant change was that his Unique Skill 'Murderer' had evolved into the Ultimate Enchantment 'Conviction King Sandalphon.'

Of course, it had not been acquired by himself.

The 'Conviction King Sandalphon' that Michael recovered from Kondou had been given to Arios. 'Murderer' was consumed for this purpose, but Arios could not resist it at will.

However, Arios himself was not dissatisfied.

He was simply happy to have the power, and continued to wait for his turn.

Orca-Aria was confused.

She couldn't afford to listen to the conversations around her, and was talking to her inner voice.

*Who am I? Am I Aria? Or Orca?*

*I don't know. I'm Aria, but I'm also Orca.*

Confused as they were, they also felt their consciousnesses becoming unified.

It was not unpleasant, but rather pleasant.

*I am "Orlia."*

This was the moment that the answer came to her.

Although Orlia was a newborn, she was still able to use the skills of a first-rate warrior and wizard.

Moreover, the Ultimate Enchantment 'Alternative' that was given to her was optimized in Orlia and transformed into the Ultimate Enchantment 'Multiple Weapons.'

This allowed Orlia to use the experience she has accumulated in her body to create a variety of weapons. Although there was a limit to the number of weapons that could be used simultaneously, the grade was equivalent to mythical-grade.

Fully armed with multiple weapons, Orlia was not afraid to fight her enemies.

Mai Furuki was in despair.

She thought she was dead, but she had come back to life.

That's good.

The problem was that Mai, even now, could not fulfill her hope of returning to Japan even though she had more power.

*I'm not giving up. My Unique Skill 'Traveler' couldn't do it, but Yuuki-kun said there was a possibility. If a Skill is born from desire, then there must be a power that can make my wish*

*come true.*

At that moment when she thought as such with an empty heart—

The Ultimate Enchantment ‘Alternative’ given by Michael was consumed at the same time as the seraphim was inhabited, and Mai’s ‘Traveler’ evolved.

It became the Ultimate Enchantment ‘World Map.’

Not only could she picture any place in the world, but she could also understand what was happening in that location, which was an extraordinary power. What was even more amazing is that it was now possible to use ‘Instantaneous Movement’ to go to any place she desired without any time difference.

For a person with spatial abilities, this was an unbelievable power.

And yet, Mai’s wish was not fulfilled.

The coordinates on this ‘World Map’ were only for this world.

In other words, it was impossible to cross the dimensional barrier.

Mai understood this without even trying.

It was a great despair, but either way, Mai was no longer free.

Everything was at Michael’s disposal.

Until the day she could finally be free to travel to her beloved younger brother, Mai would keep her heart closed and continue to follow orders.



It is not only those who have been reborn as ‘Yōten’ who are trying to figure out what is going on.

Zalario and Obera were also considering their own situations.

First of all, Zalario was grateful for the physical body he had gained. Even though he had great power, he was only able to wield it in the Otherworld. In the Cardinal World, the more power he exerted, the more energy he lost.

In order to prevent this, a body was needed, but it was difficult to prepare a vessel that could withstand the power of someone as powerful as Zalario.

Now that that problem had been solved, he would be able to show his true strength on the surface, but there was still a big problem that arose here.

*Oh dear. Because of my increased power, I seem to have acquired the angelic system skill ‘Judgement King Israfil’...*

Yes, that was the problem.

Zalario had acquired the Ultimate Skill ‘Judgement King Israfil’ upon his incarnation.

*I can’t defy Michael with this. But if I threw it away, I would be suspected of treason.*

From Zalario’s point of view, Feldway is a colleague, and although he recognizes him as

his superior, he does not hold absolute obedience to him.

Besides, he was skeptical about Michael.

Feldway trusts Michael, but Zalario does not. Zalario was not so easily convinced by a will arising from a skill.

For now, he was convinced of their purpose and agreed with it, but it was unknown if that would last forever. There was no doubt that he had wanted to avoid possessing an angelic Skill, in case their paths ever diverged.

Nevertheless, the ‘Judgement King Israfil’ had been obtained.

As long as it was not the Ultimate Enchantment, Michael’s will would not intervene. There is no doubt that this was a natural skill that he acquired, and for that reason, it seemed inadvisable to throw it away.

*Now, I wonder how much Michael knows about it.*

There was no doubt that he could rule over the angelic Skills, given his ability to control Velgrynd and Velzard. However, he should change his actions depending on how far he could grasp the owner of the system.

*My will is my own, and I will not allow it to be rewritten without my knowledge.*

Zalario was a rational thinker.

Therefore, he did not interfere in the control of the True Dragon sisters out of respect for the high success rate of the operation, even if he really disliked the operation.

And now, he was in the same position.

*Really, what a mess...*

Since he didn’t oppose it in the first place, his current situation was his own fault. Even so, he pondered on how to deal with Michael.

Obera was the same.

Like Zalario, Obera had acquired the Ultimate Skill of the Angelic System. And like Zalario, it was not something she wanted.

What Obera obtained was the Ultimate Skill ‘Salvation King Azrael.’

It was an incredibly powerful skill, but it was useless to her.

The reason is that those who were born as primordial beings already had administrative authority without having to rely on a Skill.

They could activate all kinds of magic instantly, and if they made full use of it, they wouldn’t need to rely on Skills. It was more flexible and could be used to achieve anything.

For Obera and the others, whose very existence was at the ultimate level, it made no difference whether they had Ultimate Skill or not.

That’s why she got it at this moment, even though she didn’t wish for it. Moreover, she was pretty sure that it was an angelic system skill...

*This is not good. If I don’t do something, they might find out that I’m disloyal.*

...

Obera, who had planned to turn completely, was now in a more serious situation than

Zalario.

What should she do now? Obera thought.

She wouldn't worry about having her mind read.

It was not a problem for her to erase the surface thoughts of her mind.

However, this would not be the case if she were to be manipulated without knowing it, so she needed to think of a countermeasure.

*Let's make a self-imposed suggestion.*

Obera decided.

If a contradiction arose within herself, she would not hesitate to destroy the 'Salvation King Azrael.'

Because she was an ultimate spiritual life form, she was capable of such unconventional actions.

However, if that happened, it would mean a complete break away from Feldway.

Depending on the situation, even Obera would not be safe.

But even so, for the sake of Milim, the orphaned daughter of Veldanava, Obera believed that there was no need to worry.

*It would be nothing but disrespectful for us to discern the thoughts of the Creator. Feldway is too selfish, even though he may not resurrect of his own volition.*

That was the truth.

And Obera believed that Milim was the rightful successor.



A beautiful bell rang.

Solemn, clear, and tickling at the heartstrings.

Then the door opened, and out walked Michael, Feldway, and Velzard.

With just those three people, they radiated an air of supremacy that could blow away any divine spirit that had filled the hall.

Waiting for Michael to be seated, Feldway and Velzard also took their seats.

"Well then, let's begin."

And so, the strategy meeting began.

On command, Mai stood up and projected a three-dimensional image of the entire Cardinal World at the center of the round table.

It was a miniature figure of the earth.

From a god's perspective, the stronghold of the demon lords was shown.

"These are the strongholds of the Octagram who are opposing us, and their key points.

There are six of them.”

The north pole of Guy, the western edge of Dagruel, the central west of Luminas, the forest of Rimuru, the southeast of Milim, and the continent of Leon.

In response to Michael’s comment, Mai lit up six points of light on the ground.

“I would like to hear your opinions on how we should attack.”

‘Everyone,’ he had called out, but only a few people were actually within Feldway’s line of sight.

They were Zalario and Obera, and Yuuki and Kagali.

Dino and his group were not good at planning operations, and Vega was not an option from the start. As for the others, he didn’t give them the right to speak because he considered them to be beneath them.

Zalario and Obera were silent, as if watching the situation. Kagali, sensing the atmosphere, opened her mouth.

“In this case, the aggressor has the advantage. I think we should concentrate our forces and target a single spot.”

“I agree. However, it is difficult to know where to aim.”

The defenders would have to spread out their forces. Kagali and Yuuki agreed that there was no need for the defender to match their opponents.

Surprisingly, it was Dino who spoke up after hearing this.

“Just so you know, you shouldn’t go to Ramiris’ labyrinth. Following that, the capital of the Monster Federation, “Rimuru,” will be isolated in the labyrinth during the war. It won’t be easy to get rid of, so I recommend you target it last.”

Since this information was shared, no one objected. They realized that if they took too long in the labyrinth, they might be surrounded and annihilated by reinforcements from other countries.

“Let’s do that last. By attacking elsewhere, we might be able to lure those who are holed up inside.”

Ramiris would become a huge nuisance if they were forced to play defense. With that in mind, they needed to plan his attack.

“There’s no one left at the Frost Palace. There is no sign of them.”

It was Velzard who suddenly spoke up.

Her gaze was sharp and fixed on Leon’s continent.

“Hmm, so the enemy has thought of a countermeasure. By consolidating the demon lords, they avoided dispersing their own forces.”

“Indeed. It seems that there are five places on the ground where huge power is concentrated.”

Mai removed Guy’s north pole point and strengthened the remaining five points of light.

There was only one less option, but the difficulty seemed to have increased greatly. However, the advantage of the attacker still remained.

So, where should they aim?

This is where Zalario came in.

“Feldway-sama, I have a question.”

“What is it?”

“Michael-sama has absolute control over the angelic systems, but are we able to get a hint as to where the owners are?”

He had asked an important question here, one that would affect him as well.

Obera was also in on it.

“That is a concern. If we can find out who they are, we should probably get them on our side first.”

‘Hmm,’ Michael nodded.

“I couldn’t sense them before, but now I know. I know now that others possess the ‘Judgement King Israfil’ and the ‘Salvation King Azrael,’ and I know that Dino and the others have the ‘Heavenly King Astarte,’ ‘Glory King Haniel,’ and ‘Rigor King Jibril.’ The remaining ‘Domination King Melchizedek’ is owned by Kagali, and Arius is the owner of the ‘Punishment King Sandalphon.’ And then there are the higher angelic systems that are the ‘same rank’ as me—”

At those words, Michael frowned.

“Not enough.”

And with that, everyone became tense.

“What does that mean?” Feldway asked.

Michael responded with a brief explanation.

“First, Velgrynd’s ‘Charity King Raguel’ was recovered and given to the right person.”

No one responded to this.

There was an eerie silence, but unconcerned, Michael continued.

“Then there was the ‘Patience King’ (Gabriel),’ which was never recovered and remains in Velzard’s possession.”

The icy beauty remained motionless, her face expressionless. This was a natural step to maintain the rule of the ‘Ultimate Dominion.’

“So far, the owners of these Skills are known, but three of the four remaining Skills are problematic.”

With that said, Michael’s explanation continued.

Michael had taken Velgrynd’s power for himself and had also taken in Velzard’s dragon factor. This greatly increased his power, allowing him to search for signs of the owners of the other angelic systems under his control.

However, he was only able to find the ‘Purity King Metatron,’

“What? If it was the Ultimate Skill ‘Hope King Sariel,’ wouldn’t it have belonged to the Chosen Hero Chronoa?”

“There was no response. I don’t know if it’s because my surveillance was unable to reach Ramiris’ labyrinth, or if there were other reasons.”

“Hmm, Ramiris is not to be underestimated. It’s no wonder you can’t see into the labyrinth. If that’s the case, should we assume that the ‘Covenant King Uriel’ and the ‘Knowledge King

Raphael' also have owners in the same place?"

"I'm not sure, but I think it's reasonable to assume so. After all, there is no other place I cannot explore with my skill."

There were no other skills created by Veldanava, and the only other possibility was Ramiris' Intrinsic Skill, 'Labyrinth Creation.'

So Michael's conclusion was that the remaining three existed in the same place.

He was correct.

But now they were already gone, and even their essence had been changed...

Unaware of this, Michael decided that the problem had been resolved.

And so did Feldway and the others.

"Hmm. Well then, no problem. Either way, Veldora is in the labyrinth, and we're going to attack him anyway. We can find him and then add him to our ranks."

"Is it safe to assume that the enemy has someone on the inside?"

"Exactly. We can find them at a glance, so we'll worry about that later. What we need to think about now is where to make our first target, but—"

"I think we already have an answer. There's only one known owner, so why don't we add that one to the group first?"

That's what Yuuki had decided.

His free will had been taken away, but his ability to plan ahead<sup>51</sup> still remained intact.

"Hmm. The one who possesses the 'Purity King Metatron' is here—"

All eyes focused on his fingertips.

Michael pointed to El Dorado, the capital of Leon's territory.

"That's the Demon Lord Leon who killed me." Kagali muttered to herself.

This was the moment when she realized that the flash of light that had burned her to the ground had been caused by the 'Purity King Metatron.'

"Then I guess it's decided. So, who's going to attack?" Yuuki asked with a smile.

"I'm going. I don't know or care if it's Demon Lord Leon or whatever, but you don't mind if I eat him, do you?"

"Did you not hear what was said? Leon could become one of us."

"Che, damn. In that case, I'll just have to put up with the rest of them."

Yuuki and Vega were talking to each other, as if they had already decided where to attack.

There was no one to stop them, and the decision was made.



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<sup>51</sup>The word used was “深謀遠慮” which is a Chinese idiom meaning “deep plans and distant thoughts.” Or, ‘to plan far ahead.’

There was no need to declare war, since the goal of this war was to revive Veldanava.

Michael and Feldway decided as such.

Inevitably, the war would start with a surprise attack.

There was no need to spare any forces, but Feldway had his own ideas about that.

“The goal is to obtain the owner of the ‘Purity King Metatron.’ It would be nice if we could get rid of some of the people who interfere with that, but it would be no fun to cause damage here. Therefore, let’s leave the fools behind.”

He declared that he would attack only with the strongest.

Michael’s ‘Ultimate Dominion’ was versatile but it was not unconditionally activated. It was an absolute dominion over the angelic system, but it required him to cross his line of sight with the target.

Incidentally, the ‘Regalia Dominion’ had even more complicated conditions.

The Dominion Bullet, which had been loaned to Lieutenant Kondou, could only be used on a single target, and the success rate was low unless the target was caught off guard. The ‘Regalia Dominion,’ on the other hand, changed the number of people it controlled depending on the presence of the target. And most importantly was that the success rate was lower when the opponent was of the same rank as the user, meaning that they had to inflict a considerable blow or else it would fail.

At the very least, the opponent had to have a weaker presence than the user to succeed, so it was a difficult skill to use.

The current value of Michael’s existence was about 90 million. However, Yuuki’s existence value (about 2 million) was subtracted from it, so an attack on Veldora, whose existence value was over 88 million, would not succeed.

Michael had no way of knowing that, but nevertheless, he believed that controlling Veldora would be a difficult task. That is why he needed to gather his forces before attacking Ramiris’ labyrinth.

That was also why they were trying to add the targeted person to their ranks without diminishing the strength of their own camp.

And so, the members of the sortie were decided.

“I’m staying behind.” Declared Dino, who was staying behind.

“What about me and my army?”

“I want you all to be ready to move your troops. We’re planning to launch a full-scale invasion following this operation.”

“Understood.”

The insectars led by Zelanus began to prepare for war, as did the phantom army.

Zalario’s army was being coordinated by Dhalis and Nice.

Since Obera’s army was still deployed in the otherworldly stronghold, Obera was to return and hand over the control to Oma.

Then, all the remaining officers went out to battle.

If it was just the officers, Mai's 'Instantaneous Movement' would take them to their destination in an instant. With Obera, there would be no problem to identify the coordinates using 'Presence Detection,' and they could easily meet up with each other immediately using 'Spatial Transportation.'

Based on this judgment, the surprise operation was launched.

**Chapter  
4**

**Shattered  
Ambition**

*That Time I Got Reincarnated as a Slime*

# Chapter 4

## Shattered Ambition

I received the report from Dino, but the contents were ridiculous. As I expected, Michael had made his move. It was within expectations, so that was good. On the other hand, Obera surprised me by ditching Michael's group with her own troops. I never would've expected that one.

“What, are you kidding me?”

“I’m serious. I was also shocked. By the way, this was something Michael didn’t know yet either. I was about to tell him.”

Hearing that, I was convinced that this guy (Dino) was an asshole.

There were too many things going on, and this was not the time to be bothered. No, even before that, I thought he should report to his own boss before leaking the inside information to me, the enemy.

But well, you know?

It’s because Dino had such a personality that I was saved, right?

For a moment, I felt a little sorry for Michael and Feldway.

But before I got too excited, I had to ask something important.

“So, where did they decide to attack?”

“Oh, it’s Leon’s territory. As I said, Obera left and I’m staying behind, but all the other officers have been mobilized. Pico and Gracia are also being taken by force, so if it comes to a fight, please be merciful to them.”

“What kind of a convenient story is that?! Well, I’ll keep it in mind.”

“Please do. Oh, and I have one more favor to ask.”

“I’m busy too, so make it quick.”

I listen to what Dino has to say as I prepare to go out.

“As I thought, I really enjoyed working with Vesta-san and Ramiris, and I’m bored here. So, Rimuru-san, please beat up Michael and free me!”

“...”

I was speechless.

“Hey, is your head okay? That’s not something you say to an enemy, do you understand

me?”

“So mean! We’re friends, aren’t we? Don’t be so cold! Oh, and by the way, did you apologize properly to Ramiris so that we could make up later?”

“Screw you! I told you to apologize to her yourself!”

“Wa—please wait, Rimuru-san!”

“Moving on—”

Yes, moving on.

I can’t allow myself to be manipulated by someone against my will.

“Do your best to escape from their control as soon as possible. If you don’t do it soon, you’ll lose your title of demon lord!”

“Hahaha, I’ll do my best. Well, I know you’re a dependable guy. There’s no one who’s as good at leaving things to others as I am, so I’ll just use you the best I can.”

That had to be a joke.

However, I also thought that it was very typical of Dino.

“And one last piece of advice. That bastard Feldway is teaming up with the Insectars.”

“I know. Seems pretty dangerous.”

“It’s not just dangerous. I had never seen that king Zelanus until before, but he might even be better than Guy. I can’t know for sure until I actually fight him, but I know that I couldn’t beat him even if I really tried. They’re staying back this time, but we don’t know when they’ll make a move, so don’t let your guard down.”

I’d like to say that it was just extra, but it was very valuable information, and also very unpleasant.

Just by hearing that he was like Guy or above, my depression level was at its max.

And more than that, if such a dangerous guy was waiting with his army, we needed to think of a countermeasure for immediate response.

I thought about calling back Geld and the others whom I had left in various countries, but I decided not to do that either. We would be at a disadvantage if they targeted us while we were short-handed.

If that was the case, it seemed that we would have no choice but to make do with what we had.

“Thanks for the advice. I’ll pass it on to everyone and be on the lookout. Well then, you’re going to have to work really hard.”

“Yeah. Don’t die, Rimuru.”

No need to tell me that.

This was my second life—My ‘slime life,’ and I intended to enjoy more freedom.

The war had been going on for a while now, and I was going to get rid of all the troubles and then take it easy.

And I was going to have good times with my friends, including Dino, of course.

“You too.”

I replied to Dino, as if speaking from the heart.

\*

As soon as I finished my conversation with Dino, I summoned the remaining executives to the capital city “Rimuru.”

The location was the ‘Control Room’ in the labyrinth.

When I looked at Leon’s stronghold with the ‘Argus’ surveillance magic, I saw that it was covered by a blizzard and that nothing else could be seen.

El Dorado has a mild climate. A blizzard like this was unnatural, no matter how you look at it.

It was obvious to everyone that Velzard was behind it.

There was no contact from Leon and the others, and no visual confirmation of the enemy. There must be some kind of communication jamming going on there, and we had no choice but to trust in Dino’s words.

Since the enemy was coming out with only their main force, we needed to assemble an appropriate force. If we tried to support them inefficiently, the damage would be too great.

If we sent out too many, the labyrinth defense would be too thin, and if we sent too few, we would not be able to achieve our goal.

It was a difficult decision to make.

“I see, the enemy is also very powerful.”

As soon as I explained what Dino had told me, Benimaru turned his attention to me.

If he was eager to go, then I was not going to stop him.

“I was planning to send just me, Ranga and Souei to support them, but I guess they’re more powerful than I thought. We’ll be in danger if only we show up, so Benimaru, you should join us.”

“You don’t even have to ask. So, who else are you taking with you?”

As soon as Benimaru announced that he was going to take me, his face broke into a smile.

“Is it me?”

“No, it’s not.”

I shut down Veldora’s comment immediately.

Just think about it. Veldora was a good ally, and a great asset, but we had to remember that he was the enemy’s target.

“You know, you should be aware that you’re being targeted. Besides, as long as you or I are safe, we can still be revived, so it’s nonsense for the two of us to go out and fight together!”

“Kuaahahaha! I was careless. Just leave the protection of the labyrinth to me!”

“Please do.”

I was in a serious pinch right now, so I was really counting on him.

Once the most problematic child was convinced, I turned to Zegion.

“Zegion, and Apito, continue guarding the labyrinth. We can’t leave this place empty because it seems like there is a dangerous enemy waiting for us.”

“Leave it to me. I wish you the best of luck, Rimuru-sama.”

How very reliable.

The dragon lords would remain as a force, and we’d be able to analyze their strength.

That left Treyni-san, Beretta, and Charys.

“Charys, keep an eye on Veldora to make sure he doesn’t go out of control.”

“I don’t need to be told, sir. I’ll keep a close eye on Veldora-sama so that Rimuru-sama can go into battle without worry.”

“Eh? I’m being monitored?”

“Don’t worry about it.”

“No, no, I’m curious.”

“Read this and calm down.”

Charys handed Veldora a comic book to quiet him down, and I found it reassuring in a different sense.

“Just leave Master to us, we’ll take care of him!”

“The labyrinth is well guarded, and we are training so that we will not be caught unaware this time. I am looking forward to showing you the results.”

I’d rather not have that chance, but it was reassuring to know we were prepared for anything. I nodded back to Treyni-san, asking for her help.

“Rimuru-sama has given me strength, and I am stronger than ever. I’ve been training with Charys-dono, and I have no intention of losing to Dino-sama next time. Please rest assured.”

Well, I believe you.

Whether they can beat Dino or not, the current Beretta team should be able to keep up with them.

That was why—

“I’m taking Kumara with me.”

Me, Benimaru, Ranga, Kumara, and Souei were chosen as the members of this sortie.

However, there was still one thing that was bothering me...

“Sorry, Benimaru. I made the decision without asking your opinion, but if you don’t like it, you can turn it down. Did you want to stay and protect your wives?”

Momiji and Alvis were very pregnant.

Apparently, the gestation period of monsters varied widely. Momiji’s mother, Kaede, had been carrying Momiji in her belly for over three hundred years.

In the case of beastmen, some had embryos and some had eggs, even though they were the same species. Alvis was said to have an embryo, but she also maintained her transformed state throughout her pregnancy.

It may be that the human figure was more overworking, but it seemed that there were also individual differences. Well, it’s not like I knew about the whole biology of monsters yet, so there was no point in worrying about it.

Let's hope that some ecologists who are interested in the subject would solve it within a reasonable range.

I left it at that.

What is important now was Benimaru's feelings of leaving his two pregnant wives to go to the battlefield.

'Which is more important, work or me?'

I think that this was one question that everyone hated to be asked.

Well, I had been a bachelor, so I never had to deal with that question.

I didn't regret it—I'm not jealous, okay?

I was such a corporate slave that I couldn't even come home from work on my birthday, so I think it would have been bad if I had a girlfriend.

Emotionally, the wife took priority, but rationally, it might be the job. If one didn't have money, they couldn't make a living, so one would have no choice but to give priority to their work.

However, that is difficult because there are times when a man has no choice but to protect his family.

There is no doubt that it was ideal to work for an understanding company.

Anyway, as a policy of our country, I wanted to pursue this ideal as much as possible. As for me personally, I didn't want Benimaru to have a marital crisis, and I wanted to respect his will.

Benimaru replied, as if laughing at my concern.

"That is an unnecessary concern. I will do everything in my power to protect the people I love. In the first place, I wanted to have an heir so that they could take my place in case something happened to me. If you misunderstand that, I'm not doing the right thing."

Well, that may be true in theory.

But is that really okay with him?

"But, you know..."

Strange as it may seem, I was the one who was lost.

As if to reassure me, Benimaru smiled.

"Don't worry. The safest place on earth is here, and I've asked Hakuro to guard them. If something should happen, he'll take over for me and raise my successor. So, there's nothing to worry about! Besides, I don't think I'm going to lose, and I don't doubt Rimuru-sama's victory."

He said it so refreshingly.

Souei nodded his head in agreement, and looking around at the faces of the others, they all seemed to feel the same way. It made me wonder if I was the one who was wrong.

"Hohoho. Rimuru-sama is very kind. It's probably because he was born in a time of peace, but that is not the mainstream way of thinking in a world of war. My daughter Momiji and Alvis-dono are prepared for this. On top of that, I believe in Benimaru-sama."

The fact that he didn't call Benimaru "young" showed how serious he was about his statement. As if agreeing with Hakuro, Momiji and Alvis had arrived before I knew it.

“That’s right. There is no way that my husband can lose!”

“Yes, I agree with Momiji-san. Benimaru-sama, if you leave us and die, we’ll chase you to the ends of the earth. Please be prepared.”

It seemed that these two were already prepared.

If that’s the case, there was no time for me to be confused.

“Okay, I appreciate the sentiment. I’m not saying we’ll win, but I promise that we’ll all make it back alive.”

“Hmm, just leave it to me, Rimuru-sama. All we have to do is win.”

I forgot to mention that Benimaru was an incredibly confident person. When he and Souei were together, it seemed like they could defeat any opponent.

The same was true for Kumara and Ranga.

“Yes, sir. I will do my best too, and we won’t be defeated.”

“My lord, I am with you! No matter who the enemy is, there is no doubt if it’s you!”

There seemed to be some kind of a mistake, but I understood what they were trying to say.

“You’re right. This is no time to feel lost, and there’s no use worrying about it before the fight. Although the goal is to defend Leon, let’s do our best to crush Michael’s ambitions!”

I declared as such.

Speaking calmly with Michael and coming to some beautiful understanding—I wasn’t going to pretend that we’d be able to do something like that.

He’s dangerous.

He has no humanity, and he’s willing to sacrifice anything to achieve his goal.

It was annoying, but in the end, I had no choice but to pick a fight with someone who was outside the line of mutual respect.

“Let’s go!”

Everyone nodded at my words.

Do not worry about anything until after everything is over.

I made up my mind to do so and began to ‘Teleport’ everyone to the battlefield.



By the time Rimuru and the others had begun their preparations, the war had already begun.

There was no declaration of war, and Vega began going out of control.

“Damn it, can’t he at least try to follow the plan?”

Kagali nodded in agreement when she heard Feldway complaining.

The purpose of this operation was not to destroy El Dorado, but to bring the angelic Skill owners before Feldway and add them to their ranks.

Kagali was confused when she heard that Michael’s “control” could be handled by Feldway.

However, she believed that it was tactically correct to keep the generals out of the battlefield.

So, without any doubts, she accepted the current plan.

The plan was simple.

Everyone here, Feldway, Velzard, Zalario, Pico, Gracia, Kagali, Yuuki, Teare, Footman, Vega, Orlia, Arios, and Mai Furuki, thirteen in all, would go on a rampage.

The idea was to slaughter those who rushed out to intercept them, while searching for the angelic Skill users.

Although it was a guess, and not a definite one, Kagali was sure that it was Leon. Even if she was wrong there would be no problem. The mission would be over as soon as the target was taken.

If they didn't come out to defend the city, Kagali and her team were going to go in as an assault team.

However, as soon as they had arrived at the site through Mai's 'Instantaneous Movement,' Vega went berserk, ignoring all instructions. He struck at the city's defense barriers and destroyed them. He then charged straight into the place that appeared to be the royal castle.

Kagali was dumbfounded.

*He's even dumber than before now that he's got more power. We can't incorporate him into our operations at this rate, we might as well seriously consider a purge.*

Violation of orders was strictly forbidden in any organization.

Moreover, if it was an executive who did it, it might eventually become a matter of not being able to control the military discipline. To make an example of the subordinates, they might have to think about how to handle Vega.

Anyway, the operation had already started.

Kagali decided to discuss the plan with Feldway, leaving Vega to be dealt with upon their return.

"Myself and Velzard would be a perfect diversion, but Zalario, Pico and Gracia, should stay here. I'll put the rest under your command, so you can run wild and find the people you want."

Teare and Footman, not to mention Arios, Orlia, Mai, and the rest of the undead elf resurrection team, were under the influence of Kagali's spell. The orders were not compulsory, but they were connected by 'telekinesis.'

Besides, planning strategies was Kagali's forte. Feldway recognized this and had given her command.

Therefore, Kagali gave the order.

"Vega will be reprimanded for his outburst later, but for now, hit the enemy with all your might. If you can't win, I'll allow you to retreat, so go ahead and go wild!"

With the exception of Yuuki, all of them there had gained a great deal of power. They at least had more self-control than Vega, but were still eager to see how strong they had become.

That's why, as soon as Kagali gave the go-ahead, they all started moving at once.

And Kagali, alone, followed behind.

*I have free will and have been given a certain amount of authority. I might not get any more opportunities in the future.*

Perhaps she should wait for a better time. Such a thought crossed her mind, but she was terrified that Michael was in control of her will.

If she were to be turned into a complete puppet, all hope would be lost.

It was not unlikely that this was her last chance. Optimism was a dangerous thing, and Kagali decided to take action.

From the very beginning, she had no intention of being loyal to Feldway and the others.

Michael and Feldway were crazy.

Their insanity was so palpable that Kagali was convinced that a future with them was not bright.

‘I swear I will not betray you. And I will accept your dominion.’

That’s right.

Kagali had sworn that she would never betray her friends.

Even if that meant accepting Michael’s control.

And she was prepared to repay the favor she had received from Yuuki, no matter how dirty her hands would become.

*Michael’s control seems to be absolute within a certain range. However, it might be less effective if the distance is increased. Or, if we isolate ourselves from the same space, we might not be affected at all!*

They could look for signs of the other skill owners’ whereabouts. However, the locations of those three skills were still unknown.

In other words, there was a high possibility that it was a safe zone.

Ramiris’ Labyrinth.

If they could escape there, then there was a chance that Kagali and the others could be saved.

Fortunately, they were allied with Demon Lord Rimuru.

No, that’s doubtful right now, but there was still a good chance that the good-natured Lord Rimuru would hide Kagali and the others.

So, the best course of action for Kagali and the others was to create a big mess here and find an opening to escape.

For that reason—

“Can you hear me, Laplace?”

“Chairman?! You’re all right!!”

“I’m fine, but I’m in a tricky situation. That’s why—”

“Please order me to do anything you need. So, where should I go?”

“—It’s El Dorado.”

Kagali called upon her most reliable trump card.

And so, Laplace had joined the fight.



On the other hand, Leon's subordinates immediately became tense.

They had been training for what was to one day come.

Today, it was the real deal.

It wasn't long before Leon had received a report that the city's defenses had been breached and that they were currently being invaded by the enemy.

With a follow-up report, a bleeding knight shouted.

"There are only eight intruders, but their strength is enormous! They have already entered the city, and we are in chaos!"

Leon turned to Guy, seeing off the knight who returned to intercept.

"Have you contacted Rimuru?"

"Damn, we're being cut off. She's up there. Velzard. Which means that there's more than eight of them."

Leon nodded in agreement.

Even if he had been the enemy, he would move first to break the enemy's link. This, of course, was to be expected.

So, as a countermeasure against such a situation, Rimuru was also keeping track of the situation of each force with the monitoring magic 'Argus.' There would be a bit of a time lag, but he would know if something was wrong.

Help was bound to come.

Besides...Even if they didn't make it in time and things went horribly wrong, there was still the plan that Rimuru had jokingly mentioned.

It might not have been serious, and Leon would probably want to reject it, but in a serious situation, there would be no time to argue.

In any case, he thought that he should probably do his best to prevent that from happening right now, so Leon asked Guy,

"What do you say, should we wait here until Rimuru and the others arrive?"

"No, that would be difficult. If it weren't for Velzard, we'd be fine. If she gets serious, this place could easily disappear."

"...That's not good."

Using 'Spatial Transportation' required the exact coordinates of the current location and the travel destination. If they had been cut off, it was safe to assume that the enemy had taken such spatial measures into account.

"If the 'magic transfer circle' is destroyed, then the arrival of reinforcements will be delayed even more."

If we can buy a dozen minutes of time, Rimuru should arrive by then. In order to hope for

that, they would have to defend this base.

“Right? Then I guess I’ll just have to go out there and deal with her.” Guy said, standing up.

“I will go with you.”

“I’m going to take it seriously today.”

Mizeri and Raine followed Guy’s lead.

The abilities of these two people had already been grasped after living together for the past few months.

In particular, Raine’s skills were improving rapidly, to the point that Leon began having a hard time with her.

Normally, that would be annoying, but now that she was on their side, it felt reliable.

Mizeri complained that she wished she could always take it seriously, but that one comment summed up everyone’s feelings.

Then, another annoying person interrupted.

“Kufufufu. You two weaklings won’t be of much use if you follow us. I’m unwilling to help Guy, but I respect Rimuru-sama’s orders. I’ll help you, so let’s go together.”

‘You should thank me for helping you,’ that man, Diablo, laughs out.

Raine is repulsed by this and starts to argue with him.

Guy yells at them in a disgusted tone.

Mizeri shakes her head in exasperation.

‘They must be close,’ Leon thought, as he watched them leave in a loud racket.

However, there was no time to think about such things.

Guy and the others would take care of things outside, and Leon would have to do his part.

The screams of his men could be heard from the corridor, and it was clear that the situation was bad.

He could not move carelessly, for he was in danger of being dominated. It was frustrating for Leon.

“No one is headed for the city, are they?”

He asked his trusted ally, Silver Knight Alrose, who was always at his side.

Alrose, who had been communicating with the knights on the ‘Telepathy Net,’ replied succinctly.

“Ha! It seems that they are all trying to get in the castle.”

So they were piling in. Leon nodded.

“In that case, have the Magic Knights seal off the castle! Isolate the intruders inside the castle and do not allow them to communicate with the outside world!”

“Understood!”

Dismissing Guy’s concerns as irrelevant, Leon skipped to the instructions.

If they could contain the enemy inside the castle, then there would be no damage to the city below. He would then wait for support from Rimuru and take out the isolated enemy.

“To prevent further damage, each Knight Commander must intercept the enemy.”

“Yes, sir!”

After sealing the castle with the isolation barriers, he sent the knight commanders to intercept the enemy.

It was the deployment of their reserve forces.

The maintenance of the city defense barriers was left to the Yellow Knights, who specialized in defense, and the White Knights, who specialized in recovery. The offensive Red Knights were dispatched to intercept the enemy.

The only remaining force was the Blue Knights who specialized in raiding. Depending on the situation, they would cover the weak points.

Alrose took charge as Leon gave out commands.

Before Leon, the six pillars knelt down.

“Demon Lord Leon-sama. Give us permission to go out.”

They were the demon generals under Guy.

Not Guy, to be exact, but Mizeri and Raine’s subordinates.

They used to be archdemons, but when Mizeri and the others evolved, they became “demon peers.”

Among them, Misora, the leader of Raine’s subordinates, was a duke-class demon because of her hard work. Although she was weaker than Moss, who was also a duke, she possessed an outstanding fighting ability.

Kahn, the leader of Mizeri’s subordinates, was also no slouch.

Although he was inferior to Misora in terms of combat ability, he was a powerful demon worthy of the rank of marquis.<sup>52</sup>

The other four pillars were as strong as the leaders of the Magic Knights. It was a shame to keep them idle.

“Permission granted. Go. Work with Fran and the others to defeat the enemy.”

And so, the demons were also unleashed.

The only ones standing by Leon’s side were Commander Alrose and the Black Knight Claude.

If he could, he would have wanted to send these two to intercept the enemy as well. However, because the enemy’s goal this time was Leon, they had to leave an escort here.

“It’s frustrating.”

“Please be patient. While it’s strange that I am protecting Leon-sama, we must trust everyone here and stay put.”

“Fufufu. There are eight enemies in the castle. In addition to the four knight captains, there are those demons. And there are also highly trained knights. There is no way we will be defeated.”

While Claude admonished Leon, Alrose expressed his optimism as if to encourage himself.

He knew it would not be easy, but he had to prevent Leon from falling into the hands of the

<sup>52</sup>Like with the peerage of England: Archduke › Duke › Marquis › Earl › Viscount › Baron.

enemy.

They decided to be patient and wait for good news in the throne room.

After a while, violent tremors could be heard throughout the castle.

The fiercest battleground was the battlefield where Vega was rampaging.

Misora was in command, and the demons were stalling for time with the four pillars.

Supporting them was the White Knight Maetel, the leader of the White Knights.

Maetel was a blond-haired, blue-eyed beauty. Her specialty was restoration magic, and her presence alone enhanced their ability to fight on.

The demons were taking advantage of this and were fighting well against Vega.

Yes, it was a good fight.

One by one, they would leave the battlefield, and Maetel would heal them and bring them back. This happened repeatedly.

In the face of such overwhelming violence, there was no choice but to throw themselves into the fray.

Misora's face is distorted with pain.

But she was undeterred.

She was always being tormented by the recklessness of her master, Raine, time and time again.

And besides...If the demons retreated here, Guy would purge them. So they would fight proudly and fulfill their duties.

However...Vega's existence value was over 10 million, while the demons, even the upper ranks, were only about 500,000. Even Misora was only about 700,000.

They did not possess an Ultimate Skill, and the difference in strength was obvious.

"Gahahaha! Weak, weak you're too weak!!—No!! I'm too strong. I'm just too strong. Sorry to say, but you're too weak to even think about eating, so you'll be suffering for a long time. You must hate your weakness!!"

They had no choice but to calmly deal with Vega, who was spouting off abusive tirades, trampling on the demons' pride.

No, that was the demons' strategy.

They were good at reading emotions, and were taking advantage of Vega's personality. By letting Vega rampage comfortably, they were able to maintain the stalemate.

Unlike the fierce yet stable battle against Vega, Arios' opponents were surrounded by a tense atmosphere.

"Hyaahahaha! I can kill all I want!! What the hell, this power is awesome!!"

Intoxicated by the violence, Arios was rampaging as if he had lost his reason from when he was human.

The Ultimate Enchantment 'Punishment King Sandalphon' was embodied as a pistol that could shoot as much as Arios wanted.

There was also a bastard sword<sup>53</sup> in his right hand. This was a weapon created by Orlia's 'Multiple Weapons.'

These two weapons were far more powerful than simple mythical-grade weapons. By using these weapons, Arios was able to slaughter the knights. He looked like an imitation of Lieutenant Kondou, but this was a sign of "admiration" that even Arios himself would not admit.

The leader of the Blue Knights, the Bleu Knight Oxian, and Kahn teamed up to challenge Arios.

The difference in weaponry could not be bridged, but it was fortunate that their skills (level) were on par. Kahn used his pride as a great demon to interfere with Arios with his magic, and Oxian used his brilliant swordsmanship to confront Arios.

The fact that Oxian was good at auxiliary magic was also significant. His physical strength and the durability of his sword were compensated for by the multiple layers of Kahn's and Oxian's magic.

Even so, the chances of victory were almost zero. Oxian, a nihilistic nobleman, did not want to win against an opponent who would not be injured by a direct hit. He was conscious of the fact that his sword would not be broken, and was trying to make this battle last as long as possible.

He did not want the enemy to reach his beloved Leon.

The daunting battle had only just begun.

The Red Knight Fran and the Yellow Knight Kizona, the commanders of the Red and Yellow Knights, respectively, were fighting against Orlia.

Fran was a healthy, auburn-skinned beauty, lightly armed and focused on offensive power. Kizona was small in stature but cheerful in disposition, and wore heavy full-body armor.

Fortunately for these two women, Orlia had a lack of fighting spirit.

Orlia was cautious.

Unlike Vega and Arios, she was cautious about her skill.

However, Fran and Orlia were the worst match-up. All of her magic had fallen before Orlia's shield.

Orlia experimented with her 'Multiple Weapons' to see what weapons she could create. She gave Arios a bastard sword, and Mai a crescent bow. And for herself, she had prepared a morning star and a tower shield<sup>54</sup>.

With this, she could test both her offensive and defensive capabilities.

It can be said that those two were saved by Orlia's character.

With the two of them as his test subjects, Orlia was slowly and surely getting used to the weapons she had created with her Ultimate Enchantment.

<sup>53</sup>A "bastard sword" is actually a type of longsword (somewhere in between a two-hand and one-hand sword and between the length of a short or longsword) from the 15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> century. It comes from the French word "épée bâtarde" and has the general feel of 'an irregular sword' or 'a sword of unknown origin.'

<sup>54</sup>A giant shield that the person's whole body can hide behind—any "Bofuri" fans out there?

Mai was on the battlefield, but she couldn't get rid of the feeling of being out of place. She didn't understand the point of fighting. But it was impossible to go against Michael. Even Yuuki, whom she trusted, was a follower of Michael, and Mai could not win against him.

On the other hand, she didn't feel like turning her blade on the knights who had no grudge against her, so she just stayed on the sidelines.

If she had seriously participated in the battle, the situation would have turned in favor of the angels long ago.

But that didn't happen.

"If things continue like this, everyone will be unhappy. But what am I supposed to do? Tell me, Yuuki-kun..."

Mai was at a loss, troubled, and unable to find an answer.

She still needed some time before she could make a move.



Guy and the others went to intercept her, but there was a blizzard outside the castle.

It was Velzard's work.

"I'll deal with her."

Guy's words were met with no objections from anyone.

He had fought Velzard several times before, both long ago and recently, and she was clearly very strong. Inevitably, Guy would have to be the one to face Velzard.

Besides, the current Velzard wasn't holding back her power. The evidence was that she had changed from a girl to a grown woman.

And her eyes were not the usual deep-sea blue diamond hues, but were golden. They shone with a mysterious, evil, and shining light.

That was Velzard's true form, her human battle form. Seeing this, Guy realized that she was serious.

And Velzard was going crazy with emotion.

When he flew up to Velzard, who was stationary in the sky and at the center of the blizzard, Velzard saw Guy and shouted happily.

"I love, love, love you, Guy. So—you should also kill (love) me more and more and more!!"<sup>55</sup>

She then challenged Guy with a big smile on her face.

<sup>55</sup>This translation was confusing. The MTL was "Kill each other more," but there was also an "ai" in parentheses in the middle which means "love." So it's like she's blurring the lines between killing and love I guess.

“Che, that’s why I said these things were troublesome!”

Guy was also fighting back seriously.

It would be suicide to go easy on Velzard.

And so, in the skies above the castle, a battle broke out between the strongest forces in the world.

Guy was strong.

His existence value was so high that it almost reached 40 million.

But Velzard was different.

Velzard was more than twice as powerful as Guy and had unimaginable power. She was not just the sister of the Creator, she was the most absolute on earth.

And Velzard had never been serious, even when dealing with her sister, Velgrynd. She always responded in the form of a girl, that is to say, with her own power blocked.

Even when she wiped out Veldora, she had only dealt a playful blow. This meant that her attacks were very energy efficient.

The only time she got serious was when she took on Guy.

The only reason Guy was able to fight her on even terms was because of his superior combat ability. On top of that, he always tried his best to keep the ground as unaffected as possible, so one could understand how terrifying a man like Guy Crimson was.

The battle, as always, led to a stalemate.

And then Guy realized.

This person wasn’t being controlled after all.

No, she was being controlled, but it seemed to be the result of not daring to resist, because it was in line with Velzard’s wishes.

Velzard seemed to be very happy.

It was a very familiar look that could only be seen in the midst of battle.

Rather than good news, this was a disappointing fact.

A long-repressed desire that had been suppressed for so many years, only to be unleashed because of Feldway and the others. That means that this relationship would not improve until Velzard was convinced.

If she was only being controlled, it would have been enough to release it. But since she wasn’t, there was nothing Guy could do.

Velzard wasn’t the kind of person who responded to persuasion. The only way to bring her to her senses was for Guy to stay with her until she was satisfied.

“Good grief, man!”

While complaining about this, Guy fearlessly sneered.

And then he happily intercepted Velzard.



Above the castle, even higher than Velzard and the others...

Standing in front of Feldway and Zalario was Diablo.

“Evil demon who does not know your place, you dare to challenge us alone?”

“Kufufufu. You told me to be prepared the next time I see you, but are you going to entertain me today?”

“...Damn it. I don’t have time to play with the likes of you. Zalario, I’ll let you deal with him.”

Feldway avoided a fight with Diablo.

Diablo was a troublesome demon. Knowing this well, he hesitated to deal with him.

Feldway left the castle without saying a word.

Diablo thought about interfering, but Zalario would not allow it.

He was annoyed at being pushed around, and frankly speaking, he wanted to refuse. However, since it was an order from his immediate superior, he decided that he had no choice but to accept the situation.

“It can’t be helped. Now that you have acquired the name Diablo, let’s see how strong you’ve become.”

With that, the two sides went into battle.

Zalario, though reluctant, was confident.

He had just been incarnated, but his body was in good condition. It had been a long time since he had exerted himself to the fullest, but he wouldn’t be broken down, and that lifted Zalario’s spirits.

“Dark Eight Palms.”

Zalario took the initiative.

It was a very simple technique that involved putting magical energy into the palm of one’s hand, but its power was immeasurable. Eight separate energy projectiles were flying towards Diablo.

“Worthless. So that’s the extent of it.”

Diablo, on the other hand, muttered in a bored tone.

It was not a strategy to stir up trouble or to make himself look good, but his true feelings.

When you are dealing with a lower-ranked opponent, or even a competitor, you have to be very careful about what you do.

Diablo lightly evaded the projectiles and glared at Zalario.

“Are you just an amateur with a lot of power, wasting your energy?”

He asked this quite seriously.

Zalario was annoyed by this, but kept his cool.

‘This is why I hate this guy’—He replied while hiding his anger.

“Shut up. That was nothing for me. In the first place, you and I are different in terms of the absolute amount of power we contain. You should worry more about yourself, not me.”

This was a fact.

Zalario’s conditions were now different from when he had invaded Ramiris’ labyrinth. Now that he had a physical body, he was able to fully exercise the power of his main body in the Palace of Monsters. With an existence value of over 20 million, he was confident that he would not be defeated even by a True Dragon.

There was no need to worry about wasting a bit of energy, as it would be quickly recovered. But only Diablo snickered.

“This is why amateurs are no good. In our fight, we must either annihilate our opponent with a single blow or prepare for a long battle, you know? So, the basic rule is to focus on how to fight without being exhausted. If you can’t even understand that, then Zalario, you’ve been slacking off, haven’t you?”

Zalario was annoyed by Diablo’s superior attitude.

He’d put up with it if it was said after a loss, but the fight has only just begun. It might have been a tactic to disturb the opponent’s mind, but Diablo was not aiming for that.

He was sincerely and earnestly trying to give advice.

The fact that Zalario understood this made him even more annoyed.

“Shut up. Your advice is none of my business, so just shut up. Even if you weren’t worried, I’ve been fighting on the front lines against Insectars, the natural enemies of demons. You should know that someone like you who has been living comfortably on the surface is no match for me now!”

“Hmm, that’s very impressive. And don’t worry. I, too, have fought to the death against Zegion-dono. Zegion-dono is also an insect-type majin (insectar), and a very strong one at that. Moreover, he has been given Rimuru-sama’s cells, which are enviable, and has very few vulnerable parts. So, even for me, he is a difficult opponent to beat.”

The small number of attackable parts was a self-imposed rule that Diablo had set for himself. Diablo’s own rule was that he would not target the parts made of Rimuru’s cells.

Because of this rule, the three demon girls had also been unable to defeat Zegion...But that’s another story.

“I don’t know what you mean, but no matter how much I train on this tepid ground—”

And then, Zalario suddenly remembered.

He hadn’t heard the name Zegion before, but it was familiar to him.

Zegion was the name of the person that Dino had declared as troublesome and whom even Zelanus had expressed interest in. If he had been fighting to the death against someone like that instead of training...

“I see, it seems that this is no time to be playing around.”

And so, Zalario got serious.

The battle between Diablo and Zalario was about to begin.



In front of Raine and Mizeri stood Pico and Gracia.

“I-It’s cold.”

Raine’s heart was already about to break.

If she wasn’t a demon, she would have run back to the fireplace by now—Raine was thinking about how to get out of this situation.

“Raine… You said earlier that you were going to get serious today, didn’t you? So why do you look so unmotivated?”

“That’s a silly question, Mizeri. It’s because it’s cold. Why should I have to fight in such cold weather, in a blizzard, against an opponent I don’t even hate!?”

When asked by Mizeri, Raine blurted out her true feelings without any intention of hiding them.

‘What are you talking about?’—is what a dumbfounded Mizeri wanted to say, but surprisingly, someone else also agreed.

It was Pico, who was supposed to be the enemy.

“Tell me about it! Why do I have to fight like this in a place like this where I can’t even see from all this snow!”

In fact, Pico also looked very cold.

So did Gracia, for that matter.

“Don’t complain. I’m cold too.”

She was trying to calm Pico down, but it was obvious that she felt the same way.

Raine and Mizeri were wearing maid outfits, but Pico and Gracia were only wearing thin clothes. Gracia, for example, was wearing a bare shoulder outfit that made her feel cold just looking at it.

*Oh, perhaps I was the only one who was really trying to fight?*

Mizeri was upset when she realized this shocking fact. Not caring about her, Raine and the others began hitting it off and started spilling their complaints.

“I mean, Velzard-sama, she really shouldn’t be blowing snow everywhere all of a sudden.”

“Seriously, I agree. I mean, if she was going to do that, she should have told me in advance. Then I could have worn my favorite fur coat.”

‘That way I could brag about it,’ Pico said.

“Hold on, Pico, when did you find the time to buy that?”

“Fufufu, just a little in between work.”

“Ah! That’s the city from last time! That place was a special hole-in-the-wall.”

It was the Kingdom of Blumund.

As a city where the West meets the East, goods from all over the world had begun to gather

there. Naturally, there was also an influx of many domestic monster products, and some of the clothing was of a very high quality.

Pico and Gracia had been traveling around the world on a surveillance mission. They were Dino's companions, and seemed to be doing whatever they wanted. They had their own hideouts all over the world and enjoyed the latest fashion.

Raine looks at them with an alert gaze as they chat like this.

"It's fine to boast. But first, don't you have some work to do?"

Mizeri was surprised to hear that.

*Oh, as expected of Raine. Was her earlier comment intended to catch them off guard? I didn't realize that she was aiming to take advantage of them like this.*

And so, in reconsideration of her colleague, she was quite impressed.

With that in mind, Mizeri waited for the signal to start fighting. However, what she heard next was a ridiculous proposal from Raine.

"Talking in a place like this is out of the question! Don't you think we should get out of the cold first?"

Indeed, that's exactly what she said, going at her own pace.

"“...!!” "

The three others were surprised.

The concept of enemy and ally had completely vanished, and only confusion remained.

Raine didn't care.

She quickly landed herself on the ground and activated a certain spell.

"Strategic Magic: Freezing Hell (Cocytus)!"

"Hold on, Raine! That spell can destroy the city—wait, that's pretty skillful..."

Mizeri was so disappointed, but she wasn't wrong.

Raine is the one who was weird.

The 'Freezing Hell Cocytus' magic used by Raine was a spell that froze a wide area. The range of the spell was based on the magic power of the magician, but if Raine was serious, it could cover a radius of thirty kilometers.

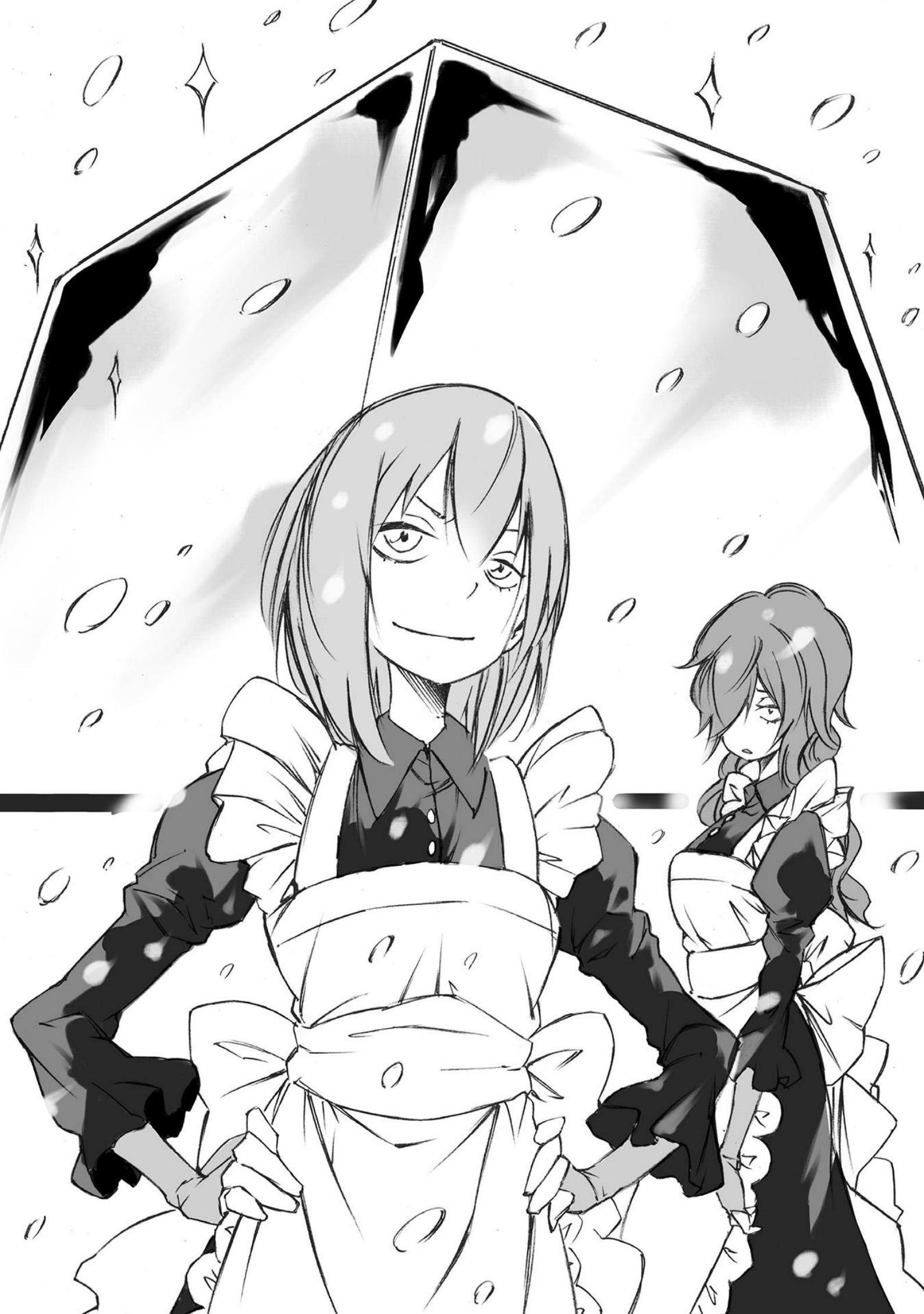
It was extremely dangerous magic, but what appeared in front of Mizeri was a three square meter cube of ice.

It was a waste of such evil magic, but there was no damage.

The result was a joke in a sense that it gave the impression that she did it perfectly.

"So what do you think?"

Raine said smugly.



And Pico grinned at her, as if she understood the meaning.

“Gracia!”

“Right, leave it to me. I know exactly what you’re thinking!”

Gracia also understood what Raine was thinking.

She rode on that speculation and immediately prepared her spell.

“Ice Breaker!!”

This was another high-ranked elemental magic that could be used against enemies. It was a magic with outstanding killing power that froze the moisture in the air and then broke everything up.

However, this time, Gracia manipulated it dexterously, and only hollowed out the cube of ice.

And thus, the “ice igloo” was completed on the spot.

“You did a good job.”

“Yeah, you too.”

Raine and Gracia acknowledged each other, and a friendship was born.

“Come on, let’s hurry and go inside!”

Pico was the first to go inside.

Without any hesitation, Raine and Gracia followed.

Mizeri, who was left alone outside, was stunned and left muttering to herself.

“Uh, Raine? So, it wasn’t a joke or a strategy, you were being serious...”

But the one who should be answering was inside the igloo.

Mizeri began feeling like an idiot and hurried inside.

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“So, the method was a secret, but we were given the honor of evolving at the hands of Rimuru-sama.”

This was the answer to Gracia’s question, ‘By the way, you guys have gotten stronger than when I last saw you, haven’t you?’

“You’ve been telling that much to the enemy...Okay, that’s enough.”

Despite Mizeri’s dismay, Raine had also been getting information from Pico and the others.

It seems that the skills of Dino and Pico were under the control of Michael.

Pico had the Ultimate Skill ‘Rigor King Jibril,’ and Gracia had the Ultimate Skill ‘Glory King Haniel.’ Although they were not aware of it, they probably wouldn’t be able to disobey Michael’s orders.

In addition, she had also been told the full extent of the enemy forces.

The information given by Raine was not very important.

It was only the fact that she mentioned Rimuru’s name without permission that was careless, but Raine judged that it was okay because she had not specifically been told not to talk about it.

If Rimuru heard this, he would be angry, and would probably lament that he should have

kept his mouth shut.

In any case, in exchange for the information that she was able to evolve thanks to Rimuru, Raine was able to get a very important story out of them.

From there, they were just complaining to each other.

They started talking about each other's hardships and complained about their bosses.

Incidentally, the four of them worked together to build a fire and poured magic power into it to keep the room at a comfortable temperature. On top of that, the sweet potatoes that Raine had hidden in the fire were being roasted on skewers, giving off a faintly delicious aroma.

At this point, Raine took out some sweet sake.

"This is perfect for when it's cold."

"You, you're not actually going to..."

"Well, come now, Mizeri-san, let's not be so formal. I think it's fine, don't you?"

"You just want to drink, don't you, Gracia? Well, I want to as well, so I won't stop you."

"That's right, Mizeri. After a fight, you're supposed to drink to make up. It's called common sense."

When did we even fight?

But there was no one other than Mizeri to intervene here.

With a three against one, the odds were really against her, so Mizeri had no choice but to give in. Thus, the inside of the igloo became like a women's club.

As the battle outside raged on, the girls continued to whisper amongst themselves...



Leon sat on his throne.

The time of peace was over.

With a loud bang, the front door was broken down.

The great door leading to the audience room shattered into pieces, scattering debris like dust.

And out of that dust, the intruder proudly emerged.

"Hoohohoho. Good day, everyone! My name is Footman. Footman the "Angry Pierrot" of the Moderate Clown Troupe. Pleasure to make your acquaintance!"

With his fat body and angry clown face, he exuded a certain air of strangeness.

Leon had met this clown once before.

He was now in remembrance of his own stupidity, a business partner with whom he had made a contract.

He had felt a certain power when he met him before, but now it felt nothing like that.

He felt an uncanny power.

What bothered him, though, was Footman's true purpose.  
If he had wanted to capture Leon, it would be reckless for him to come alone.  
*As I thought, the enemy's forces must have outnumbered ours. But I don't understand. What is he thinking? If he goes and helps the others, he would have the power to change the course of the war...*

As he pondered this, Leon left his seat.  
“You come here alone and think you're going to make it out alive?”  
Alrose shouts.  
Claude keeps his hand on his sword, ready to protect Leon at any moment.  
Leon thinks.  
This Footman must have some other purpose, or—  
Just as he was wondering about that, a woman steps through the broken door and into the audience room.  
“Ah, there you are, Demon Lord Leon. Do you remember me?”



It was a beautiful woman with a graceful appearance.  
She was dressed in a navy-blue suit, like what a secretary would wear.  
Her skin was white and delicate, and her blond hair was tied up in a chignon that suited her well-toned face.

Her eyes, indigo with a mysterious glow, were fixed on Leon.  
“Since I’ve changed my appearance, it’s probably more accurate to say it’s nice to meet you. I am Kagali. I’m the chairman of the Moderate Clown Troupe. I’ve got a grudge against you for killing me, so I guess I’ll have to deal with you myself.”

Needless to say, it was Kagali.  
She greeted him, while somewhat over-acting.  
Then, two clowns followed Kagali, coming in one after the other.  
The girl with the teary-eyed mask was Teare.  
She was carrying a large sickle on her shoulder and greeted everyone in a playful manner.  
“I’m Teare. Teare the ‘Teardrop’ of the Moderate Clown Troupe. I hate sadness. All of Kagali-sama’s enemies will be eliminated by me!”

When Teare declared as such, she began spinning her scythe dexterously and moved to her place as if dancing.

Stepping forward to take his place was Laplace, a man with an asymmetrical clown face that looked like he was playing a trick on someone.

“I’m Laplace the ‘Wonder Pierrot,’ vice-chairman of the Moderate Clown Troupe. Now then, everyone. It sure is a beautiful day today—but I don’t care about that! I was told to ‘dash here as fast as possible’ and now I’m really tired. And it looks like we’re in big trouble. I feel like I want to go home...”

It was very typical of Laplace to be complaining without saying hello.  
As soon as the clowns finished their speech, the last one showed up.  
A young boy wearing a black Imperial military uniform with a fearless smile on his face. It was Yuuki Kagurazaka, who was still under Michael’s control.  
“Hey, I guess I’m the last one. I hear my name is Yuuki. You’re Demon Lord Leon, aren’t you? I think we’ve met before, but my memory’s a little foggy. I’m sorry, but I’m not sure.”

There were different stages to Michael’s domination.  
There were cases where the victim retained some of their free will, and cases where they were more restricted.

In the case of control over the angelic Skills, there was no fear of betrayal, so they were allowed to behave quite freely. However, Yuuki was being controlled by the “Regalia Dominion” and was therefore restricted to a greater extent.

In a sense, this was evidence that Michael acknowledged Yuuki. If he had recognized Yuuki as a lower rank, he would have allowed him to act freely like Kagali and the others.

Anyway, the current Yuuki was somewhat vague, and as soon as he finished introducing himself, he lost interest in Leon and the others, and stood there leaning against the door.

‘Hmmm...’ Leon assessed the situation.

There were five of them total, but each one of them was as strong as him. No, they seemed to have more strength than that. Since he was outnumbered, the situation had become the worst.

Leon couldn't decide whether or not to make a move.

He might be able to defeat at least one of them, but this was not the time to make a desperate attempt. If he couldn't win, he should run away, and he had the means to do so.

But Leon was also at a loss because he saw a light of reason, not madness, in Kagali's eyes.

He had been told by Rimuru that Kagali was the Demon Lord Kazalim. He had almost forgotten about her, but he remembered clearly those eyes full of madness.

Kagali would say that she had been jealous, but to Leon, it was a horrifying look. And yet, now, those eyes were as beautiful as a lapis lazuli.

*She's not a different person. So, there may be something else going on. And does that mean there's room for negotiation?*

In spite of the situation, Leon understood the circumstances of the other party.

In front of such a Leon, the clowns continued their speeches.

"Demon Lord Leon. You are not only responsible for the destruction of Kazalim-sama, but also for the murder of our brother and friend, Clayman, the "Crazy Clown!" I won't make it easy for you. Because I'm angry!"

And with that, Footman bent his fat body in a dexterous bow.

Laplace followed suit.

"Yeah, that's right. That idiot Clayman didn't become a demon lord because he wanted to. He was just the only one suited for it, so we sent him out as a replacement in case something happened to the Chairman. I regret it so much that it turned out like that."

His voice sounded sad, as if he was remembering Clayman.

"It's really sad, isn't it? But Kagali-sama gave us a chance for revenge! I'm going to give you the full force of our grudge, so stay with me until the end!"

Teare added sadly at the end.

And then the battle began.



On Leon's side there were three people.

On the other hand, Kagali's group had five.

However, Yuuki was not moving.

Teare headed to Alrose, and Claude took on Footman.

There were only two people left, but of course, Leon would have to deal with them himself. Under normal circumstances, defeat would have been inevitable.

However, that was not the case.

As Leon drew out his Flame Pillar, Kagali struck him with the Ruin Scepter borrowed from Michael.

The impact of the mythical-grade weapon collision sent shock waves throughout the hall.

At the same time, Leon heard a voice in his head.

“Can you hear me? I want to negotiate.”

His prediction was correct.

“Yes,” Leon nodded.

“Thank you. I’ve got eyes on me. That’s why I’m acting with that in mind. No matter how careful I am, it can never be enough.”

“You’re right,” Leon said with a look.

The conversation was like a tightrope walk, with both sides playing out a fierce battle.

Incidentally, Laplace’s role was to relay the ‘thoughts.’

Through the master-slave connection between Kagali and Laplace, encrypted information was being transmitted. Kagali sent the information to Laplace, and then retransmitted it to Leon. The reply from Leon was also encrypted and transmitted to Kagali through Laplace.

The reason for using this particular method was to prevent Michael from reading her mind. Believing that not all of her thoughts could be read, she put up multiple barriers in the back of her mind.

The reason she was so wary was because Kagali was about to betray Michael.

Kagali had once been trapped in a grudge against Leon, but now that she was away from Michael, she had regained her composure.

As a result, she decided that it would be best to join forces with Leon.

As long as she could get to Ramiris’ labyrinth, she could escape Michael’s surveillance. And that mysterious slime would free Kagali and the others by any means necessary.

“Anyway, didn’t you prepare some kind of connection passageway in case of an emergency? I can’t get to the labyrinth with magic, so if there is one, let me use it.”

There was also transfer magic, but that was a gamble. If she did any unplanned actions, Michael might tighten his control over her.

Ideally, she wanted to evacuate directly to the labyrinth.

If that was not possible, Kagali wanted them to be prepared to receive her and the others.

“I see, I understand your situation.”

“I’m just taking some time, but you’re the one Michael wants, right? You have the ‘Purity King,’ don’t you...?”

“...I won’t deny it.”

Leon admitted that there was no point in hiding it now.

The moment they attacked this country, he judged that the owner of the skill was already known.

In that case, the words of Kagali and the others became more credible.

With such a large difference in strength, there was no point in extracting information from Leon. They could simply disable Leon and take him to Michael.

Besides, while Teare and Footman were rampaging wildly, Alrose and Claude were still unharmed. If they really wanted to kill them, they would have been dead by now.

In this situation, there was no point in acting like this.

That's why he could be sure that Kagali's words were true.

"I believe you. There is indeed a magic transfer circle in this castle that leads to Ramiris' labyrinth."

"I knew it!"

Kagali's expression brightened as she realized that her plan was now more likely to succeed. Then, while crossing blades fiercely, she threw herself forward and enthusiastically engaged in negotiations.

Leon, who had given up his suspicion of Kagali, wondered if he should simply nod.

However, what came to his mind was Chloe's smile, the girl Leon loves.

For some reason, that smile was not looking upon Leon's face, but on Rimuru's...

From the depths of Leon's heart, dark emotions began to well up.

This is not jealousy. Absolutely not!

Leon swallowed his feelings and endured it.

Then he thought.

*Rimuru would accept these people. It wouldn't hurt my conscience too much to put them through the trouble.*

Leon felt a little better, as if he didn't have to worry about it.

He nodded his head and began to confirm the arrangements.

"So, are you sure it's just the five of you?"

"Yes. There are other people who used to work for Yuuki-sama, but I don't trust them. It's not like they're going to kill us if we leave them here, and there's no point in holding them hostage against us, so we're going to leave them behind."

"Wouldn't it be better to take them with you, to reduce the enemy's strength?"

Leon was surprisingly kind.

The reason why he is misunderstood and gives off a cold impression is because he is clumsy. Kagali sensed that too.

"You're not what I thought you were. You didn't take it easy on me when I was your age..."

"It couldn't be helped. With a demon lord attacking, I couldn't afford to be calm either. I didn't want to prolong the battle and cause civilian casualties."

She understood what he meant.

If two demon lords of equal ability fought each other, the damage to the surrounding area would be extensive. In order to prevent that, the best option would be to aim for a short-term decisive battle like Leon had.

"That's true. Besides, I was a fool back then, so I have no right to complain. Forget it."

Leon was caught off guard by Kagali's reaction, because he had expected her to complain more.

"You've really changed."

With that said, he muddled his words, changed his mind and resumed the conversation.

“The “magic transfer circle” is located behind this room. This room itself is heavily guarded by a ‘Multilayer Barrier,’ so it’s just a matter of opening the hidden door behind the throne.”

“Thank you. So, what are you going to do?”

Michael’s goal was to get Leon.

‘We should run away together,’ Kagali implied.

Leon’s answer, however, was clear and without hesitation.

“I am staying. If I was going to run away, I would have gone to Rimuru from the beginning.”

Kagali nodded in agreement.

“Michael’s rule is absolute, you know?”

“However, there are also conditions. Worst case scenario, even if I were to be controlled, Guy could observe the process and come up with a way to deal with it.”

That was just one of the reasons, not all.

Leon was really just trying to protect the people here in El Dorado with his own hands.

That was the true intention of Leon Cromwell, the man who gave up being a Chosen Hero in order to protect the mixed races of human and demon.

“You really are a clumsy guy. For the sake of others, you’re willing to throw yourself away—”

“Hm, that’s not the case. There are few people as vicious as I am. I tolerated the sacrifice of others because I wished to save the only one I loved. I will be the one to pay for it.”

These words showed Leon’s resolve.

Kagali understood this and decided to respect Leon’s wishes. She had her own priorities, and there was no need to try to persuade him.

And so, the decision was made.

Kagali also informed Teare and Footman about the situation through Laplace.

Leon, on the other hand, had been talking to Alrose and Claude. Both of them felt that the enemy was not serious, so they were convinced by Leon’s explanation.

The only thing left to do was to force Yuuki to go with them.

Leon gave Kagali a look. In the direction of his gaze, there was a hidden door.

Understanding his intent, Kagali pretended to be blown away and destroyed the door. Seeing this, Laplace signaled to Footman and Teare.

Alrose and the others helped in the act, and Footman and Teare also flew to the hidden room as if they were excessively blown away.

“Yuuki-sama!”

“Well, well, I guess it’s my turn, huh?”

With that, Yuuki leisurely made his way to the hidden room—

*Okay! Now all I have to do is get Leon to activate the magic circle!*

Kagali was sure of their success.

It had been a tightrope walk, but now she could escape from Michael.

That’s how it was supposed to be.

However—

It was here that fate had given up on Kagali and the others.

Michael, who was still in the Heavenly Star Palace, had discovered Obera's betrayal before Dino could report it.

Michael was furious.

It was the first time in his life that he had experienced this.

He was furious that something had gone wrong with his plan.

The cause, as it turned out, was his own naivete.

In spite of his immense control of power, he had allowed himself to be led astray by trusting in the uncertainties of his companions, and this was the result.

Obera had received the ‘Salvation King Azrael,’ and Michael knew it. At that point, he should have made sure of his domination.

It was Michael’s mistake not to do so.

If he made a mistake, he’d have to make it up.

Michael was furious, but calmly thought as such.

As a result, he reinforced his control over the angelic Skill owners currently under his control with the “Ultimate Dominion” via Feldway.

As a result, Kagali’s ego was also taken away.



Just one more step.

That step felt so far away.

Feldway emerged from the broken door that led to the audience room.

“I was curious, but I didn’t realize you were planning to betray me. All of you are fools who do not understand my cause!!”

Seeing Feldway screaming in rage, Kagali knew that the plan had failed. At the very least, she should try to let Laplace and the others escape.

All it would take was a single command.

And yet, she was unable to utter a word.

“It’s useless. The ‘Ultimate Dominion’ has taken complete control over you. Michael-sama is also angry. I let you do whatever you want. And then there’s—”

Feldway’s cold stare pierced Leon, who had stopped moving.

“It looks like our target was here as well. You, too, will be a loyal servant.”

Before Leon could even listen to those words, he had activated ‘Purity King Metatron’ at full force. He was about to unleash a godlike blow with the desperate intent to kill.

But it was already too late.

*Shit, I can't fight this—*

Loyalty towards Michael, whom he had never even met, began to well up as if overflowing from the depths of his heart. Leon's memories and knowledge remained intact, but his ego was filled with ecstatic feelings.

*Chloe, I—!!*

The smile of the girl he loves, etched into his mind, was being overwritten by an irresistible elation.

In the same way as Leon, Kagali's heart had also been stolen.

Her loyalty to Michael outweighed her feelings for her dear friends.

*I'm always so naive—*

Kagali lamented in a terribly sad mood, but even that regret quickly disappeared.

“Chairman, you can't just give up now! I—I believe in you!”

Kagali heard a voice that confused her.

However, it sounded like the voice of a child screaming through multiple layers of glass, and could not be heard clearly.

“Kagali, does the spell not work on him?”

“Yes. Laplace is special, so he doesn't have to follow my orders.”

“I see. Then he is unnecessary.”

A cold voice that seemed to have lost all emotion was transmitted to Kagali.

“Yes. You've been through a lot, Laplace. At the very least, I will take care of you with my own hands.”

“Wai—Chairman?!”

Laplace was the only one who was confused by Kagali's change.

Teare, Footman, Yuuki, and even their former enemy, Leon, were all ready to watch as if it was a matter of course.

Kagali's Ruin Scepter glowed in gold—

“I won't just sit here!!”

Laplace was about to give up on everything when a figure suddenly appeared out of nowhere and pushed him away.

The person then flicked the destructive golden ray with her sword.

“Who the hell are you?!”

“I don't have time for formalities. But I'll tell you anyway. I am Silvia. I'm a very strong helper, so don't worry and leave this to me!”

It was a beautiful woman with long and braided greenish silver hair.

The thin dress with a silky sheen was made of a special material from the Monster Kingdom that could be used in battle. Her milky-white legs glimpsed through the slit. But if you looked closely, you could see that she was also wearing denim shorts.

That's wrong.

It might have been intended as a precaution in the event of a fierce battle, but if that was the case, why not wear pants in the first place?

Her fashion sense was the embodiment of selfishness, showing her strong will to not give up fashion. Even from that one thing, he was able to catch a glimpse of her personality.

The woman called herself Silvia.

She was Leon's master, the one who had been called upon as a trump card.

Laplace felt nostalgic when he saw Silvia.

Laplace was an undead elf created by Kagali.

Perhaps it was because he had been a Chosen Hero before his death, but although he was never controlled by Kagali, almost all of his memories had been lost.

That's why he did not remember that his real name was Sarion Grimwald, nor did he realize that Silvia, the woman who had just saved him, was his wife.

Nevertheless, he instinctively knew that Silvia was an important person for him.

"I don't know about you, but I'm a real man. I don't want to be so pathetic as to leave this place to you all alone!"

Laplace was back on his feet.

It was such a sudden turn of events that it had made it difficult for him to grasp the situation, but that was always the case.

So, as always, he would just have to get out of this situation no matter what.

"You guys, if you're still alive, then get out of here. You look like you've been beaten to a pulp by Teare and Footman, and you might die, you know?"

Keeping his eyes fixed on Kagali and Yuuki, he called out to Alrose and Claude, who were lying in the corner of the room.

They had managed to endure with recovery medicine, but the contents of their space-expanding waist bags were almost completely used up. At this rate, they would not be able to escape, yet they still snickered at Laplace's call.

"Hahaha, don't worry. I've taught my students never to run away in times of trouble. If I don't set a good example, then no one will follow me."

"Fufu, a knight should never abandon his master and run away."

Both of them understood that they were already a liability, not an asset. Still, they did not run away because they were ready to give up their lives for Leon.

Believing that Rimuru and the others would soon come to support them, they decided to buy time even at the cost of their own lives.

"You guys are idiots."

"Hahaha! I never thought I'd be praised by a clown."

"Claude-dono, I don't think that's a compliment. But I do envy you that you can still laugh!"

There was a small smile on Alrose's face.

Those who are determined are strong.

Laplace thought to himself, 'I also can't lose.'

"Let's start over. If we kill him, the Chairman will be back to normal, right? I'll do my best, too!"

He said so, while glaring at Feldway. He suspected that Feldway was up to something, even more than Michael who was not present.



Thus, the battle resumed in the audience room.

On one side were Laplace, Silvia, and the two injured knights.

Against them were Feldway, Kagali, Leon, Yuuki, Footman and Teare.

They were outnumbered four to six and were overwhelmingly disadvantaged in terms of strength.

“Silvia-san, can I ask you something?”

“Oh, what is it?”

“Honestly, how far do you think we can go against them?”

“Hmm, yes, well...even if I tell you, it won’t make you happy, will it?”

“I guess so. Wait, don’t answer that!”

‘That’s certainly true,’ Laplace laughed.

Silvia felt nostalgic about the exchange.

No, it wasn’t the conversation, but the very existence of this man, Laplace, that made her feel nostalgic.

*Could it be that we know each other? No, I don’t think so. Well, whatever. This is not the time to be worrying about that.*

Silvia, with her modest yet graceful chest, was undoubtedly a warrior. She quickly switched her mind and identified the enemy.

Feldway did not move, as if wanting to leave the work to his subordinates.

It was obvious from his attitude that he was looking down on Silvia and the others.

However, in the current situation where she was at an overwhelming disadvantage, perhaps she should be grateful.

*I’d like to say that his arrogance will be his downfall, but he’s the head of the ‘Primordials’<sup>56</sup>. I’ve heard from the Ancestor, but this is crazy. He’s stronger than me, to be honest.*

The ancestor always had a sloppy personality, so it had always been best to take everything he said with a grain of salt. Silvia had also been deceived many times and suffered a lot.

However, judging from the activities of the Primordials, she never thought they were weak. Even if she only knew half the story, they should be considered as superior to Silvia.

In fact, when confronting them in this way, she could sense that their presence was frighteningly dense.

In the first place, all the people here are monsters.

---

<sup>56</sup>“Shigen (始原)” Like the Seven “Originals/Firstborn” Angels.

Even Alrose and Claude are good enough to be called demon lords in their time. Among them, Feldway was exceptional. If she fought him head-on, she would be defeated. Therefore, the only strategy to be taken here was to buy time.

*Rimuru-kun, who El-chan mentioned, will be here soon, right? I don't know how well he'll do against such monsters, but he's already defeated Velgrynd, right? Well, we can only hope for the best.*

Silvia was also one of the high-elves created by the ancestor, and she was proud of her abilities. In fact, she had an existential value of just under two million, which was about the same as that of an awakened demon lord. In addition to that, her weapon was a mythical-grade Vajra<sup>57</sup>, which surpassed Leon's in terms of skill. The number of blades was variable, and she specialized in handling it by stretching it like a spear.

Moreover, she possessed the Ultimate Skill 'Thunder King Indra,' the highest of the weather system skills, which made her stronger than Teare and Footman.

But even still, she was not as strong as Feldway.

She was not even close.

Despite her confident assurances to Laplace, it would be difficult to turn the tables. However, as long as Feldway didn't make a move, there was still a chance to win.

The possibility of Leon being manipulated had also been taken into consideration. She had told him how to separate his mind from his Skill, and believed that Leon was still desperately trying to regain his ego.

Incidentally, if he did this, there was a very high possibility that he would lose his Skill. This is exactly what Obera did, and it would be a huge loss in terms of strength.

In the first place, it was not that easy, so she taught it to him as a last resort.

*Well, it's all up to Leon-kun. He was a very good pupil, but I think it's still a 50/50 chance whether or not he will succeed...*

She was not very optimistic, but there was still hope that Leon would return to the front.

It was a pretty bad wager to find a way out of it, but there was no other way. If there was nothing she could do but complain, then she would just have to be prepared and do her best.

"You two, stick to supporting me! And the clown (Pierrot) over there! Your opponent is—"

"It's me. If I don't work once in a while, I'll lose my reputation."

Silvia's comment was interrupted by Yuuki, one of the enemies. Without saying a word, he launched a kick at Laplace.

"Eh, Wait!! Are you serious, boss?!"

Laplace, even when starting the battle with no questions asked, did not forget to introduce himself.

"I am a clown, but my name is Laplace."

<sup>57</sup>A ritual weapon from Hindu mythology that is meant to symbolize the properties of diamond (indestructible) and a thunderbolt (overwhelming force). It was said to be the weapon of the Hindu thunder deity Indra which makes sense considering Silvia's Ultimate Skill (Thunder King Indra)

While dealing with Yuuki, he shouted it back at Silvia.

“You’re still dangerous, Laplace. There’s still plenty left in you, so I’ll be your opponent as well as Yuuki-sama.”

While saying that, Kagali joined the fray.

“That’s not fair! I mean, are you trying to make me cry?!”

Even Laplace had become desperate.

Even if it was just one of them, it would be difficult.

But now that both of them were coming at him at the same time, he couldn’t even afford to make fun of them.

At this point, Leon made his move.

“Well, it looks like you’re my opponent, Master Silvia. But I don’t want to point my sword at you. Won’t you come to our side?”

Leon made such a suggestion in a gentlemanly manner.

Even though he was being manipulated, his memories were still intact. If Michael or Feldway ordered him to kill, there was nothing he could do, but otherwise, he could get some control.

However, betrayal is absolutely impossible. Simply asking this proposal was the best concession Leon could currently make.

“You know, Leon-kun. You were the one who called me here, remember?”

“Yes. So, by all means, become an ally—”

“I don’t think we should talk. Because I don’t want Leon-kun to resent me. If I cooperate with Leon-kun now, he’ll complain about it later when he comes to his senses.”

Silvia laughed in reply.

She knew what Leon’s purpose was in life, and what he had lived for. That is why she could not betray Leon’s true feelings.

However, Leon could not understand his feelings.

“...?”

Leon also had memories of Chloe.

He still felt that Chloe was important to him, but that did not take precedence over his “orders.”

“You have a girl you like, don’t you? How do you think she’d feel if she saw Leon-kun right now?”

Leon’s heart wavered when he was asked that question.

However...

He quickly calmed down and regained his usual coolness.

“That’s a silly question. After Feldway-sama’s wish is granted, I will have what I want. And I’m sure she’ll be waiting for me until then.”

“Um, are you sure about that...?”

Silvia asked quite seriously.

Based on what she had heard from Elmesia and the others, It was clear that Chloe’s attention was not on Leon.

If Leon didn't launch an onslaught from here on, she didn't think Chloe would be waiting for him.

But that was Leon's own problem.

It was not for her to interfere with, so all Silvia said was, "Oh well. Just don't cry if she rejects you."

When Leon heard this, he twitched, but no one noticed it. And so, the battle between Silvia and Leon began.



Laplace was the strongest majin in the Moderate Clown Troupe.

He possessed a vicious power and could even be called an uncrowned demon lord.

He was reborn as an undead elf by Kagali's hands, but his experience and abilities as an ex-Chosen Hero had remained intact. In addition to that, Laplace possessed two Unique Skills.

The first was the Unique Skill 'Falsifier.'

This ability, which was able to interfere with an opponent's perceptions, helped him to launch illusionary attacks.

Disguising one's weapon is a useful skill.

A spear in his hand could appear as a knife to his enemy.

He could make a knife appear out of thin air when one thought he had nothing in his hands.

Or, it could also be a bomb disguised as a knife, making it the perfect tool to play with the enemy.

And with this skill, it was also easy to pretend to be dead and make an escape.

That alone was heinous, but there was another skill that was even more so.

The power of foresight, the Unique Skill 'Future Vision'—this was Laplace's trump card.

This ability allowed Laplace to see a few seconds into the future.

Because of this, he could clearly see whether or not his 'Falsifier' skill would work against the enemy.

This is why Laplace was always able to fight without being caught off guard.

He had high physical ability and a good sense of combat.

Along with his perfect prediction of the future and a thousand different ways to attack, Laplace was invincible. He claimed to be the vice-chairman of the Moderate Clown Troupe, but in terms of simple combat ability, he easily surpassed the chairman, Kagali.

It was precisely because of this that Laplace had remained undefeated for so long after becoming a majin.

Besides, even running away was one of Laplace's tactics, so it was a rare event for him to admit defeat.

But even that Laplace admitted defeat to the boy standing in front of him—Yuuki Kagurazaka.

But that was a while ago...

“Footman, Teare! Support Leon. And while you’re at it, take care of those deadbeats!”

That was Kagali’s order.

Laplace launched a counterattack as there was no way to run away.

There were two opponents. Moreover, they were both as strong or even stronger than him.

*Actually, the boss is probably the most dangerous one, since Kagali-sama, for all her strengths, is not good at close combat.*

Laplace had known Kagali for a long time.

He was familiar with Kagali’s strengths and weaknesses, and judged that he could handle her, even if her presence was different from that of Kazalim.

In fact, Kagali’s physical strength had increased, making it more difficult for her to fall. Her strength had increased, her destructive power had increased, and her speed had increased all by an order of magnitude—but her overall ability had not changed. That is why it was possible to respond sufficiently by increasing the speed of reflection and anticipating her moves.

Even for such a Laplace, he still thought that Yuuki would be a bad match-up for him.

Yuuki’s strength appeared to be the same as before, but that assumption was dangerous. Therefore, Laplace decided that he should be more cautious of Yuuki than Kagali.

“No hard feelings, Yuuki-san!”

He shouted and threw a knife at Yuuki. But it was shown in ‘Future Vision’ that they would all miss.

Unperturbed by this, Laplace made his next move.

Aiming at Yuuki’s evasive maneuvers, he threw knives one after another.

He did not forget to check Kagali.

On the surface, Laplace was aloof, but he was quite desperately trying to use his two powers.

Even so, he was unable to reach Yuuki.

*No way! Even with my ‘Future Vision,’ I can only see the future where everything will be wrong...*

A few seconds in the future was meaningless.

In the first place, ‘Falsifier’ did not work on Yuuki. This was the same opponent that Laplace was unable to defeat in the past, and it seemed that it would be difficult for him to win this time as well.

*But that’s still not a reason to give up, is it*

If he had wanted to admit defeat so easily, he wouldn’t have gone to such a dangerous place in the first place.

Laplace was also someone who had believed in Yuuki’s words.

“Boss, you’re the one who said it! You said you were going to take over the world!”

“Hahaha, you’re an idiot, Laplace. Do you still believe in that nonsense?”

“Of course I do. I’m persistent. I’ve decided to give up when I die, so I’ll keep believing

in you while I'm alive!"

Yuuki laughed mockingly at Laplace's desperate shout.

"This is ridiculous, Laplace! Just because you're a clown doesn't mean you can't have a funny laugh."

With that condescending remark, Yuuki closed in on Laplace. As the two of them approached, Kagali, who was about to unleash the 'Golden Destruction Ray' from the Ruin Scepter again, came to a halt.

Laplace, however, was having none of it, and was desperately trying to block Yuuki's attack.

*What a heavy fist! Is this guy really human? There are so many different types of other-worlders, it's scary. However, even so...*

There was something that bothered him.

At first glance, Yuuki's attack seemed harsh, but in fact, the hits were slightly off the mark.

It was not due to Laplace.

It was Yuuki's intention to do so.

At that moment, Laplace realized.

*Eh? Wait a minute... This signal, could it be—*

He remembered the pattern of the faint vibrations he felt whenever he parried a fist or blocked a kick.

It had also been used to communicate with Clayman, and was encrypted so that no one else could decipher it. And the only people who knew the code were the people he trusted.

In other words—

*Uh, let's see... "Hurry and figure it out, idiot! When you notice it, work with me," was it?*

Eh, really? Although Laplace had his doubts, the possibility that this was a trap felt slim to none.

Even without Yuuki having to go through such trouble, Laplace would have eventually been defeated.

So Laplace did as he was told and tried to team up with Yuuki.

"I'm more powerful than you!"

"Let's test it."

And, well, he was immediately grappled and thrown off in an instant.

*It was real!*

It was not a trap, but a way to entrust a message for what was to come.

While pretending to roll on the floor—or rather, it actually really hurt—Laplace read the message.

The fact that they had fought each other for a short period of time, instead of just a moment, gave him a good amount of information this time. And it revealed Yuuki's current situation.

*Boss, you've come to your senses!!*

In this desperate situation, it was good news.

Laplace, hiding his joy under his mask, read the information further.

*Well, what is it? We're going to keep pretending to fight and restrain the Chairman, right?*

*If you're leaving the rest to me, does that mean the boss has a plan? All right, let's do it!*

Without hesitation, Laplace takes action.

He made it look like he was going to attack Yuuki, but instead he grabbed Kagali.

“...?!”

“All right—now ‘Skill Steal’—!!”

“What the—”

Kagali fell to her knees.

Laplace held her up.

“A-Are you okay, Chairman?”

“Eh, Laplace? Um, what about me—Wait, no way...my skill—‘Domination King Melchizedek’ is gone!”

Kagali looked confused, but in an instant, she grasped the situation.

“Fall back, Teare, Footman!”

She shouted to protect herself, which was quite a feat. Even Kagali could not hide her surprise. Even so, she understood from the bottom of her heart that the situation had changed drastically at this moment.



Silvia, who had been fighting Leon, was having a difficult time.

Leon was her student, but he had a talent that Silvia recognized.

Even when he had been assimilated into the Spirit of Light and was active as a Chosen Hero, his skill with a sword was on par with Silvia.

Moreover, he now had the Ultimate Skill ‘Purity King Metatron,’ and was one of the demon lords as an unparalleled swordsman.

When Leon got serious, he would unleash a ‘light speed slash.’ Although he did not actually reach the speed of light, it was called that because his sword slash would shine like a flash of light.

And the power of the Ultimate Skill ‘Purity King Metatron’ turned it into something quite vicious.

It is the ultimate power of the holy attribute.

It is an extraordinary skill that gives one the ability to freely manipulate the most powerful holy magic, ‘Disintegration.’

By controlling the ‘Purity King Metatron’ Leon deployed spiritrons around his body and sword, turning himself into an ‘incarnation of destruction,’ disintegrating everything he touches.

Leon was undefeated with the combination of his ultra-fast swordsmanship and the power of absolute destruction.

Silvia was no slouch either.

Her Skill, ‘Thunder King Indra,’ was an ability to control lightning, the strongest power in nature.

The power of her lightning strikes was perfect, but the true essence of ‘Thunder King Indra’ lay elsewhere. Silvia had turned her own body into a lightning strike, enabling herself to attack at divine speeds.

For this reason, Silvia was feared as the “Thunder Emperor” since ancient times.

It was precisely because of this that Silvia was able to deal with Leon’s attacks. She changed her vajra to suit her needs and fought fluidly with her sword.

Silvia, who had maintained her reputation as a master in this way, inwardly felt a sense of crisis.

*I knew you were strong, but I didn’t expect you to have grown so much... I’m happy to see my students grow, but it also depends on the time and place...*

Those were her true feelings.

And the reason for her sense of crisis came from the fact that she felt Leon was not yet serious.

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As his master, Silvia knew that Leon had a weakness.

Leon was too naive.

If there were allies nearby, he would not fight with his full strength. Such kindness was a virtue, but on the battlefield, it was only an opening.

The ideal Chosen Hero was one who’s ‘desire to protect became power,’ but that was only in fairytales. In real life, that was just a bit too naive.

Silvia knew.

Silvia knew that this city had been created by orphans and oppressed majins saved by Leon. Elmesia had also provided financial support, but Silvia was the one who helped establish the city.

He was often misunderstood because of his deceitful words and actions, but the real Leon was truly a kind man.

When a girl named Shizu went out of control and sacrificed her friends, he was heartbroken and lamented that it was his fault. He left her in the care of the Chosen Hero of that time, thinking that it would be better for her to live in the human world than to be raised by a demon lord like himself.

She knew that he had been watching over the girl and, as a result, had been the first to detect the existence of Demon Lord Rimuru.

It was just a coincidence that Elen and the others had become acquainted with the girl—Shizue Izawa—but Silvia, through Elmesia’s connections, had tightened her surveillance even more than Demon Lord Leon.

That's why she had been frustrated by the reality of multiple misunderstandings and dismayed by the awkwardness of her apprentice. However, she did not meddle unnecessarily.

Given Leon's unlucky nature, she judged that doing so would only lead to complications.

It was frustrating, but she could only watch over him.

But this time, he had finally asked her for help.

That's why she came to him, hoping to respond to his request, but the situation was very unfavorable.

There was one reason for this.

Leon's weakness had disappeared.

Leon's kindness had always prevented him from being serious, but now that Michael's dominance took precedence over everything else, he would use his skill to the fullest under the right circumstances.

The dreaded 'Purity King Metatron.'

Leon always had it under control, using it with minimal power. However, the true nature of the 'Purity King Metatron' is that it was a power specialized for mass annihilation.

This was also the case with the 'Thunder King Indra,' so Silvia's sense of crisis was very great.

*If Leon-kun were to get serious...*

What would happen if Leon activated his power without caring about the damage to his surroundings?

If Leon got serious, this country would be annihilated.

Silvia was determined not to let that happen.

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A fierce sword fight ensued, and the battle continued back and forth.

In the aftermath of ultra high-speed combat, the audience hall was being destroyed to the utmost limit.

Worst of all, the 'magic transfer circle' had been destroyed. Even though that magic circle had been made of magisteel and was extremely durable, Leon's stray bullets had destroyed it.

It was no longer usable. Not only would she be unable to escape, but Rimuru and the others would not be able to come.

Silvia felt sorry for herself, but Leon was not a man who she could fight while protecting something, so she gave up.

Alrose and Claude were not able to help Silvia either.

"Wha-What a terrifying battle...I can't even see it. I can't even tell with my own eyes who is in the lead."

"Don't worry—I know it sounds strange, but I am the same, Claude-dono. I thought I could keep up with the real Leon-sama, but it seems that I've been conceited."

"Hmm. That's true."

Although they didn't know Silvia's true identity, they knew that she was no ordinary person. However, when they saw that Silvia was more powerful than they had imagined, they could not help but be amazed.

The same could be said for Teare and Footman.

"Oh man. That Leon guy is even stronger than I thought."

"Hohoho. It's would be too difficult to interrupt that fight! So then, what can we do?"

"Yeah, yeah. Then we'll just have to hunt down the small fry!"

The two clapped their hands together.

Then they turned their sights on Alrose and Claude.

"Damn, they've set their sights on us..."

"Even if it's just one, let's show them the pride of a knight!"

"It's suicidal. However, it's the only thing we can do here."

Alrose and Claude had made up their minds.

As the proud leaders and instructors of the Magic Knights, they had decided on the place of their death.

Their lives were gravely in danger, but then suddenly, a voice rang out.

"Fall back, Teare, Footman!!"

Kagali had come to her senses just in time, and Alrose and Claude were lucky to survive the crisis.



Feldway was confused.

Something incredible had just happened, right in front of his eyes.

For tens of thousands of years, nothing had ever gone wrong with his plans.

But lately, everything had been falling apart.

It all started with Cornu's blunder.

The loss of the army had been unthinkable. The Underworld Gate leading to the world in question had been closed, and the details still remained unknown.

The next shock was the return of Velgrynd.

Having been banished to the other side of the world, Velgrynd was supposed to be left to disappear in the world beyond.

However, she somehow returned to the Cardinal World, and on top of that, had completely annihilated Cornu.

It was an unthinkable event.

However, he had had no choice but to admit that it was the reality.

That is why this time, he made a plan for the perfect situation.

And yet, here they were.

Not only had Yuuki, who was supposed to be under his complete control, regained his freedom, but even Kagali, who received an angelic Skill, had come to her senses.

“What did you do? You, how did you escape the ‘Regalia Dominion’?”

Feldway asked Yuuki in a voice that sounded as if it was coming from the depths of hell.

He wasn’t expecting an answer, but it was Yuuki.

He smirked and replied in an agitating manner.

“It’s simple. I’m a genius, and I felt that this ‘Regalia Dominion’ thing was dangerous, so I substituted with the strange will that was growing inside of me.”

“A ‘strange will,’ you say?”

“Ah. Perhaps it is the ego of the Ultimate Skill ‘Greedy King Mammon’ that I had acquired? The Greed instinct was something I took from Mariabell. It was a little creepy, so I didn’t trust it.”

He didn’t trust the ‘Greedy King Mammon,’ even though he had used it a lot. This cautiousness was probably the reason why Yuuki was Yuuki.

‘I had a hard time,’ Yuuki continued.

“I observed the ego of the dominated ‘Greedy King’ Mammon and figured out how it worked. It took longer than I expected, but it looks like I got it right at the worst possible time, so you’ll have to excuse me.”

He even winked at Laplace and the others.

This had all been a strategy.

Yuuki had been observing the situation while he was being manipulated and had come to the conclusion that he could not beat Feldway.

Of course, the future was a different story.

He believed that if he continued to get stronger, he would eventually be able to compete with him someday. The reason was that Yuuki’s growth rate was extraordinary—though not as abnormal as Rimuru’s.

Therefore, he began to stir things up now.

It would be a great success if he could convince Feldway and the others that he had enough time to get them to retreat.

In the worst case, he wanted to at least buy time until Rimuru and the others came to support him. He thought that he could achieve that goal just by continuing the conversation.

Feldway was upset by Yuuki’s attitude, but his thoughts were calm. He judged the authenticity of Yuuki’s words and saw that they were not lies.

*You’ve seen through Michael-sama’s skill, huh? There’s no way a mere mortal could have done that. It’s dangerous. This guy is too dangerous...*

Feldway narrowed his eyes and identified Yuuki as an enemy.

That is why he decided to reveal his hidden hand.

*I would have liked to keep it under wraps until the last minute, but it looks like there is no other choice. I have to deal with Yuuki here and now, rather than letting him find out what the*

*traitor is up to.*

Feldway saw Yuuki as a dangerous foe.  
Of course, it was not because he was agitated.  
He just could not tolerate Yuuki's Skill—the 'Skill Steal' from the 'Greedy King Mammon.'  
If this was left unchecked, not only Leon, but also the others might be freed from Michael's control.

Now that he had activated the Ultimate Dominion, the trust between them was as good as lost. Therefore, even if it was a small probability, he judged it to be an unacceptable risk.

"As expected of Yuuki-sama!"

"Well, I guess."

"It's the boss after all! You're a man who just can't be taken down!!"

"Well, not really."

"Right, right! It's almost like we've won now."

"Hohoho. I don't know what's going on, but I'm sure we've got the upper hand!"

"That's a bit of an exaggeration, but I think we've got a little cushion space now."

Feldway glared at Yuuki's group with a scathing look.

"Hey, you! I have to ask, can you take away Leon-kun's skill too?"

Silvia and Leon, who had been sword-fighting without regard to the changing situation, paused for a moment to distance themselves. Taking advantage of this opportunity, Silvia asked Yuuki.

Although they did not have time to exchange greetings, Yuuki answered with a friendly smile.

"Unfortunately, I can't right now. I don't have the luxury to accept—"

"Eh, that's too bad. I'll leave you to it then, but don't expect me to help you, okay?"

"You got it. In the meantime, you should take care of Leon."

"Got it too! I'm going to show him how serious I am as his master."

Silvia said her words and resumed her sword fight with Leon.

Yuuki focused all of his attention on Feldway, knowing that he could count on her.

What he had said earlier about not being able to take away the skill was true.

The current Yuuki had just robbed the 'Domination King Melchizedek' from Kagali. There was no way he could take away another skill before he had finished analyzing it.

More importantly, there was a difference between skills that were self-created and skills that were given. In Kagali's case, since the skill was given to her, it was not stable and thus easier to steal.

There was a high possibility that the skills rooted in oneself could not be taken even if Yuuki was in perfect condition.

With the current Leon, whose ego was being manipulated, there might be a chance...but...In any case, it was impossible for now. If he explained that, it would only put him at a disadvantage, so Yuuki muddled his words at the end.

*Either way, the enemy will have no choice but to doubt my words.*

Yuuki thinks.

If it were him, he wouldn't believe in the enemy's words.

In other words, even if Yuuki said he couldn't, Feldway had no choice but to act as if there was still a possibility of losing his skills.

That was Yuuki's tactic of exaggerating himself.

Now, the enemy could not move carelessly. If the stalemate continued, the tactical victory goal would have been achieved.

However, it was at this point that Feldway began to laugh.

"Fufufu, good grief. I'm going to have to deal with you here, after all."

Hearing that chilling voice, Yuuki realized that his plan had gone awry.

*Did I stir things up too much? No, even if he gets serious here, we should be able to withstand it.*

Even if he couldn't take on him alone, there were five of them here.

Silvia had Leon under control.

So then, Yuuki and the others could all take on Feldway.

However, a great miscalculation occurred here.

Feldway's trump card came into play in a way that Yuuki could never have imagined.



"Kill the kid (wake up, Jahil)!" Feldway ordered.

"...?"

Yuuki could not read his intentions.

Leon had his hands full with Silvia, so he was unable to comply with the order. If someone moved, it would be Feldway himself.

*What is—*

A moment's hesitation would reveal the outcome before an answer could be given.

"So, you called for me, Feldway. I owe you a debt, but it's not nice to be treated like this all the time."

After feeling a burning pain in his chest, the voice reached Yuuki's ears.

Yuuki coughed up blood, and when he looked down at his chest, he saw a hideous arm growing out of it.



“Footman!! What are you doing?!”

Kagali shouted, and Footman turned around in response to her voice.

Pulling his arm out of Yuuki’s chest, he sneered evilly.

And then he replied.

“Shut up, Kazalim. What are you doing, throwing away the name and appearance that I gave you?”

He spoke with a fluency that was unlike the usual Footman.

And that evil presence had grown much larger than before.

“Shit, this is...”

Yuuki muttered and fell to his knees.

As a Saint, Yuuki had complete control over his body as a spiritual life form. That’s why he was able to stop the blood flow by his own will, but the damage he suffered was not light. A normal person would have died instantly.

“Huh? So you’re still alive, you stubborn piece of trash. Don’t bother me anymore!!”

Footman said so and kicked the dying Yuuki away. The extraordinary force of Footman’s kick had the destructive power to disable Yuuki with just one blow..

“Guah!!”

“Yuuki-sama—”

Kagali and Teare went to help Yuuki, and Laplace stood in front of Footman.

“Who the hell are you?”

“Who am I, huh? What kind of lowly scum are you that you don’t even know this great magician?”

Yes, that man was not Footman.

The supposedly destroyed Great Magician—also known as Jahil.

“The Great Magician, is it Jahil, by any chance?”

While concentrating on Leon, Silvia maintained a broad perspective and analyzed the battle situation. Naturally, she was also listening carefully to the conversation and reacted to the words “Great Magician.”

“So, you’re Silvia, huh? Indeed. I am Jahil!”

At Jahil’s declaration, the entire place became tense.

Kagali paled and Silvia scowled.

Kagali, who was Jahil’s daughter, and Silvia had known each other for a long time as high elves created by the ancestor. Although they disliked each other and had parted company, they had a high regard for each other’s abilities and were on guard against each other.

Knowing Jahil’s wickedness, they both understood that his resurrection would be the worst of all evils. And that was Feldway’s trump card.

In the land after Milim’s rampage, he sought out Jahil, who had lost his body and had become a wandering soul. He protected Jahil, who would not have escaped extinction without him, and let him sleep for a long time.

While Lieutenant Kondou was controlling Demon Lord Clayman, Feldway implanted

Jahil's soul into Footman. He thought that Footman, with his weak ego and intelligence, could be taken over by Jahil's power.

His plan succeeded, and Jahil slowly invaded the Footman's body. At first, he had only passed on information to Feldway, but the balance of power was eventually reversed when he inhabited the seraphim, and Jahil took full control.

All that was left was to awaken at Feldway's signal.

Feldway, who had intended to awaken him at the most effective time, decided that now was that time.

"Come on, Jahil. Use the power I've given you and kill them all."

'Useless tools must be disposed of,' Feldway ordered.

Jahil, along with the seraphim, had been given the 'Charity King Raguel' that Michael had taken from Velgrynd. He had secretly taken it for himself, owning it as the Ultimate Enchantment 'Blaze King Agni,'

"Gera-gera-gera! I've been waiting for this day. Finally, I can use this power to the fullest!"

Jahil laughed evilly.

Footman's huge body was engulfed in flames, and he became a fire emperor who destroyed anything he touched. Jahil, who could control fire at will, unleashed his vicious power.

Footman's "angry mask" shattered and melted.

And the face that appeared was ugly and distorted, as if representing his heart.

"Footman—give me back my Footman!!" Kagali shouted.

But her sorrowful voice only pleased Jahil.

"Gera-gera-gera! You're so weak. I'd like to give you a good beating, but it's just too bad! I'm under Feldway-dono's orders to kill. Forgive me, you fool."

With that, Jahil hurled a fireball at Kagali.

While not as powerful as Velgrynd's, Jahil's fire was still powerful. If exposed to its heat, any material would burn up in an instant.

"Damn it, don't ignore me!"

Laplace tried to deflect the fireball with a magic bullet, but it was far too powerful. It was swallowed by the fireball and had no effect on it. The fireball then swelled up and swallowed Kagali, Teare, and Yuuki.

But as the flames subsided, a figure remained standing.

"It's useless."

It was Yuuki.

Despite his fatal condition, he stood up and blocked the fireball with his 'Anti-Skill.'

"...Hoh? My flames won't penetrate. So that's it. It's not a matter of power. It's nasty. Let's just admit it's a real pain in the ass."

Jahil's eyes lit up with the light of a researcher.

His mouth twisted with pleasure, as if he were curious about a new toy.

"Boss, are you okay?"

“No, of course not. I’d like to go lie down in bed quickly, but the problem is that the enemy doesn’t seem to want to let me go.”

“Well then...What are you going to do?”

“The important thing is—”

The important thing was to survive.

He understood that, but couldn’t think of a way to do so.

According to Yuuki’s observations, Jahil’s power was ten times greater than Laplace’s. Compared to Yuuki himself, it was certain that his power was five times greater.

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In fact, from a divine point of view, Laplace had an existence value of a little over a million. That strength was unparalleled compared to a demon lord seed, but as an awakened demon lord, it was at the bottom of the group. It was Laplace’s experience that allowed him to make full use of his skill and make him so powerful.

In comparison, Yuuki, who was still a Saint and so high up that it would not be surprising if he became a “divine spirit,” had an existence value of about 2 million. However, he possessed the powerful Skill ‘Greedy King Mammon’ and the foul ‘Anti-Skill’ that disabled other Skills, so he had a combat ability that could not be measured by numbers.

Teare had an existence value of 2.4 million, which was higher than Yuuki’s if one was only looking at the numbers. She had a Unique Skill called ‘Optimist’ which allowed her to have less desire for herself. Under certain conditions, she could raise all of her physical abilities threefold, but this would only work against lower-ranked opponents.

Since she did not have the same level of skill as Laplace, she was the weakest of the four.

And Kagali was the one with the largest existence value among them.

She was the most powerful among the four, with an existence value of nearly 3 million. In addition to that, she was reinforced with the Ruin Scepter, so her total existence value reached 4 million.

Sadly, however, Kagali was a support-type. She was not that good at close combat nor long-range combat. It was not that she was of no use, but she was not very promising in terms of combat.

In comparison, Jahil’s existence value reached 14 million.

This was the result of adding Jahil’s power to Footman’s power. And Jahil enjoyed not only magical combat but also close combat for the purpose of taunting the weak.

He could take them all down with pure violence alone if he so wished.

It was, without a doubt, the worst possible situation.

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Despite being a genius, Yuuki was frustrated with himself for not being able to come up

with an answer that could get him through this situation.

He wondered if he should have continued pretending to be insane for a while longer, but rejected the idea. That was one way to go, but the best time to get Kagali back had been at that moment.

It was just that Feldway was a step ahead of him.

He had prepared carefully and had taken all possible precautions. The more moves one had hidden, the more advantages they would have.

This time, Yuuki honestly regretted that he had lost.

Even though he had been with Footman for a long time, he had not realized that Footman, who was supposed to be his friend, had any evil intent. Rather than saying that it was his fault for not being able to see it, he should have praised Feldway for making such careful preparations.

*It's always like this. This world is really so unreasonable...*

While reflecting on his actions, Yuuki lamented the absurdity of this world.

There was a possibility that Teare might have had something to do with it, and he tried to be wary of it, but soon realized that it was meaningless.

If there really was such a thing, there was no reason to keep it in mind at this time.

Suddenly, he remembered that slime, which seemed to be the embodiment of unreasonableness.

*Rimuru-san. If it's that man, then he would never give up. I'm the one who came here first, but he came later and did whatever he wanted. And that's even better than the ideals I've been trying so hard to achieve, it's really sickening.*

That's what he thought, but he wasn't displeased.

Rather, it seemed to make him laugh from the bottom of his heart.

“What are you laughing at?”

“No, I’m just remembering something amusing. I thought you were a truly nasty and dangerous opponent, but there is someone who is even scarier than that. He’s the only one who can easily overcome my tricks and still remain aloof.”

“Wahaha, Rimuru-san, huh? Well, that guy really is something else.”

“Right? It’s not my nature to rely on others, but I’m willing to do so here. He’ll be here soon to support us, so there’s only one option to choose.”

Yuuki smiled fearlessly.

“Yeah, that’s true.”

Laplace also laughed.

“Buying time. That was the only way from the start, so it’s a decision that’s a little late coming.”

As if caught up in the moment, Kagali stood up as well.

“All right, I’ll do my best too!”

Teare was also motivated.

Yuuki, Laplace, Kagali, and Teare.

The four of them stood shoulder to shoulder, facing Jahil, who had taken over Footman.

“I’ll avenge you, Footman.”

With Laplace’s spirited words as a signal, the fierce battle began.



Silvia, while fighting Leon, observed Yuuki and the others from a broader perspective.

They were outnumbered four to one, but it was Jahil who actually had the upper hand.

Yuuki was half-dead and half-alive.

The hole in his chest seemed to have been filled, but it had worn him down.

Fortunately, Yuuki’s constitution was a special one called ‘Anti-Skill,’ This stopped Jahil’s fireball, and the fight to the death has been barely maintained.

Yuuki was the key defender, and Laplace and Teare were his guards. With Kagali providing support, they were able to stand up to their formidable opponent (Jahil).

*Yuuki-kun, right? If he falls, then the whole thing will collapse...*

It wouldn’t just be a loss of their defenses. The mood of the entire party was made by Yuuki’s cheerful instructions.

In response, Laplace pushed himself harder.

Teare was just a drifter, so she could be strong or weak depending on the mood.

Kagali, the command tower, seemed to understand the situation—

*Well, even if she understands, she can’t do anything if she doesn’t have help...*

In other words, there was nothing they could do.

They were slowly losing strength, and it was now a game of how much time they could postpone until they were defeated.

Stalling.

The answer they came up with was probably the only correct one.

“Damn, that’s really bullshit strength. My ‘Anti-Skill’ can ignore all the ‘defensive barriers,’ but his pure durability is too high to do any damage...”

“You’re right, his nature is just too different. Even with my prediction, I can’t see a future where I can do any damage.”

No matter what they did, they knew it wouldn’t work, and it made them feel hopeless.

But there was only one reason why this was not the case.

They believed that Rimuru and the others would soon arrive.

*As El-chan said, Rimuru-kun sure is amazing. Even when he’s not here, he is still a hope for everyone.*

Silvia was also hoping for the best.

“Even for you Master, don’t you think you’re being a bit too lax, looking the other way when dealing with me?”

“Perhaps so. But in a battle of similar powers, the one who is impatient will lose!”

Silvia evaded Leon’s divine speed slashes with a flick. They were both owners of the same line of Skills, and of the same school of thought. They knew exactly what the other was doing.

The same was true for Leon, but he was under orders from Michael to defeat the enemy. There was a clear difference between those who could just take their time and those who had to defeat their opponents, and this difference affected the course of the battle.

And there was another reason.

It was Leon’s deep psychology.

Subconsciously, Leon was struggling to regain his free will. It was only a minor effect, but it was definitely slowing down his body.

That was why the battle between Silvia and Leon was very stable, with Silvia in the lead.

That’s what Silvia thought.

*Even so, why isn’t Feldway making a move? I’d really be in a bit of trouble if he joined in here.*

On the other hand, Yuuki and the others would be defeated by the imbalance at once.

Why hadn’t that happened?

Silvia turned her gaze to Feldway to find out why.

She observed and made an inference.

*He doesn’t seem to be in a hurry. It’s like he thinks that Leon-kun and Jahil are nothing but pawns. He’s going to take our data here and make sure to kill us next time.*

Silvia was disgusted by the answer.

He was being overly cautious.

Normally, one would think that it would be more reliable to kill the enemy here. The reason Feldway didn’t was because he was putting his own safety first. That led her to believe that he had more than Leon and Jahil in his clutches.

That was true.

Based on her observations, Feldway believed that he could destroy the enemy with the forces he did not bring this time.

He refrained from making a move here, considering the possibility that the enemy might be hiding some secret technique. This cowardly and morbid cautiousness was the essence of Feldway.

At any rate, Feldway’s decision to stay out of the way seemed to accomplish their goal of stalling. But just when Silvia was feeling a little more relaxed about the situation, something happened.

“Oh, yes, I remember now. That ‘Anti-Skill’ was a trait that the Dragon Princess’ pet once had. As I recall, it was a very troublesome constitution that blocked magic and skills, but there are established ways to deal with it. It’s easy. If it’s pure power that is neither magic nor skill, it can’t be repelled!!”

Jahil may be evil, but he was also a top researcher. As a high elf of the Ancestor, he had a proven track record, and his eyes were very reliable.

That's why he saw through the correct answer.

The 'Anti-Skill' had also been passed down to Milim's pet Chaos Dragon at the end of its life, but Milim's power defeated it and succeeded in sealing it.

Jahil, who was unaware of this example, changed his attack method without hesitation, as if he was confident in his answer.

In other words, simple violence.

Using his own body as a weapon, he attacked Yuuki.

"Gera-gera-gera! You're too weak!"

Jahil smiled broadly and beat Yuuki to a pulp.

From that point on, it was completely one-sided.

Yuuki barely managed to fight back with his physical skills, but the difference in strength was insurmountable. It didn't take long for the three of them to fall to the floor together, as Laplace and Teare were lightly dealt with.

"Jahil—!!"

In a fit of rage, Kagali activated a spell, but it was blocked by the fighting spirit surrounding Jahil's body. Then, Jahil's fist plunged into Kagali's stomach. It was a pure difference in power that decided the outcome in a brutal way.

"Gera-gera-gera! Do you understand the folly of challenging me? So, Feldway-dono, are you sure you want to get rid of them?"

Jahil asked for the final confirmation.

He may have intended to kill them from the start, but at least he was making his boss look good.

"Do as you please." Feldway replied succinctly.

Hearing this, Jahil laughed evilly.

"Kazalim, my son. It's a shame. You were a good test subject. But rest assured, I will soon have a new toy to replace you right away!!"

Jahil declared and began to squeeze power between his outstretched hands. Then, the pure fighting spirit swirled and condensed, transforming into a vast amount of energy that could distort even space-time.

The atmosphere crackled and burned.

This was neither magic nor skill, but pure destructive power. Not only was it enough to destroy Yuuki, but it was so powerful that it might even damage Jahil himself.

Silvia looked at it sideways and paled, thinking that this was no good.

All the power was concentrated in one point, creating a destructive force that went beyond nuclear magic. If she took the hit seriously, she'd probably end up disappearing without even leaving her body.

Realizing that this was truly dangerous, she put up a 'defensive barrier' with all her might. Leon must have also made the same decision, because he stopped his attack on Silvia and went to defend Feldway.

Yuuki was trying to defend himself with 'Greedy King Mammon,' but he seemed to be

running out of energy. Kagali's 'Barrier' with the Unique Skill 'Schemer' was the only last resort.

Although she had lost the 'Domination King Melchizedek' to Yuuki, Kagali had once reached her ultimate level. Therefore, her skill, 'Schemer,' was unique but had grown to a level of performance comparable to an ultimate skill.

But it was not enough.

In order to overturn the overwhelming difference in power, Kagali alone was inadequate.

*I can't do it with just this. I can't withstand it...*

That was Silvia's intuition.

Jahil's attack was two-tiered. The energy of pure destruction was wrapped up in the 'Blaze King Agni.' After Kagali's 'Barrier' was blown away by the fireball, the real attack would be waiting.

This was all because of Jahil's absurd amount of magicules. It was an inconceivably dense mass of energy, several times denser than Silvia's. Even if the current Silvia had joined in with the others, it would still be impossible to prevent this attack.

Wasn't there anyone else who could prevent this?

Thinking so, she looked around at the four frozen people.

Kagali was doing her best, but to no avail, and Yuuki was running out of steam, as mentioned previously.

So, what about the other two?

Teare didn't have an Ultimate Skill, and her 'defensive barrier' was probably not enough to stop anything.

In that case, there was no choice but to hope for Laplace, the last one.

With that in mind, Silvia turned her gaze to Laplace and saw something surprising.

*Eh? That face—No way, that person is—*

Underneath Laplace's shattered mask, there it was.

It was a very familiar face.

She thought she had long forgotten it, but just one look was enough to fill her with memories. Silvia couldn't help shouting involuntarily.

"Run, Sarion!!"

But it was too late for that advice—

"Well, goodbye. I'll break your soul into pieces and wipe you off the face of the earth!"

Jahil's words signaled the end.

True to his words, he caused a great deal of destruction.

There was a flash, and then an explosion.

Leon's castle was blown to bits.

A great ball of fire raged wildly, spreading heat waves and flames as it disappeared—



**Epilogue**

**The End of  
the Dream**

*That Time I Got Reincarnated as a Slime*

## Epilogue

### The End of the Dream

Yuuki laughed in despair. *Oh, dear. I tried my best, but is this as far as I got?* It had been a little over ten years since he had come to this world. It started with the encounter with Kagali, the Demon Lord Kazalim, and he had been striving to achieve my wishes ever since. He had made friends with whom he could share his heart, and together, they had shared many hardships.

However, rapid growth also came with its own setbacks. Rimuru's continued success was an anomaly. It was inevitable that the plan would collapse when he failed to see the change in Clayman. For Yuuki, this had become a guilty feeling.

There were a few other things on his mind, and so he decided to finally greet everyone with a thought-accelerated 'Telepathy Net.'

"Sorry, guys. I didn't do a very good job, so I'm sorry for the mess I've gotten you into."

Yuuki apologized, but no one blamed him for it.

"It's not just the boss' fault. Rather, I think my failure was a bigger factor."

Kagali also felt a great deal of guilt. If she hadn't been so obsessed with Leon in the first place, the current situation wouldn't have happened. However, if Kagali hadn't been obsessed with Leon, she might not have met Yuuki, so it wasn't all that bad.

As if to comfort Kagali, Teare also spoke up.

"Don't cry, Princess. I remembered a few things, too. I don't know your name or anything, and it's like a mixture of memories and feelings, but I was the princess's maid servant. And you know, it's the king who was to blame! The maids were all on the princess' side. So don't you regret it, okay princess? I'm only happy if I can accompany you to the end!"

Even if it ended here, Teare had no regrets.

Kagali saved her life that had already ended, and gave her a new purpose in life. If she could die with her, Teare would be happy.

"Teare, you..."

"Ahaha, that was fun! Footman and Clayman loved the princess. So, we were grateful to the boss. I like her as the Demon Lord Kazalim because she was strong and handsome, but after all, the princess was the best looking!"

“Well, that’s true. At first, I laughed because I thought it didn’t suit her, but now I’m more comfortable with it. If that’s what you’re supposed to look like, then I guess it’s natural.”

Even Laplace agreed, then added with a laugh, “So, boss. Don’t worry about it. We did the best we could. I have no regrets. Clayman will be waiting for us in the afterlife, so let’s live happily there!”

He did everything he could. Bad things and good things. As a man who walked the middle lane, he lived his life without shame. That’s why Laplace was so proud of himself and his friends.

“Wahaha, it’s the last time, so you can complain more, right?”

“I have no complaints.”

“Mmm-hmm! Yeah!”

“Well, we all believed the boss. If we can’t do it with the boss, then we’ll just give up.”

Still, Yuuki insisted.

“Laplace, are you sure you want to come with us? I heard someone calling your name. If you’re on your own, shouldn’t you be able to get out in time?”

Silvia turned to Laplace and called out “Sarion.” At which point, Laplace—

*“I see. So my real name was Sarion.”*

He remembered a lost memory. He turned to Silvia and was relieved to see that his beloved wife was safe. But that was all. He was already dead. It had been more than 2,000 since he had been born as Laplace. How could he go home now? Besides, the most important thing for Laplace now was his friends, Yuuki, and the others.

That’s why Laplace replied with a joke, “No problem. I am Laplace. I am the vice chairman of the Moderate Clown Troupe, and the Wonder Pierrot Laplace. Well, it’s a little late for that now, so don’t worry about it, boss.”

“...Is that so?”

“Sure. Besides, you can’t just leave me out of this at the last minute!”

Hearing this, Yuuki also felt warmth in his heart. Although the world had been unreasonable, his life had not been so bad. In that case, he decided to fight with all his might until the last moment.

“You’re all idiots. But I don’t hate it.”

“Don’t let the boss tell us that!”

“That’s true. Yuuki-sama is smart, but sometimes he acts like an idiot. That’s exactly what he did this time.”

“Ahaha! But, you know, it’s kind of fun to work together in the end!”

Facing the threat of Jahil, Yuuki and the others’ hearts were united. When you’re with your friends, even if it’s hell, you can still enjoy it. So there was no need to be afraid.

“Then, farewell. I’ll break your soul into pieces and wipe you off the face of the earth!”

Even after hearing Jahil’s death sentence, the smiles on Yuuki and his friends’ faces did not disappear. Immediately afterwards, a flash of light brought everything to nothing.

Playtime was over. The ambitions of Yuuki and his friends had now reached the end of their time.

## Afterword

It's been a long time, everyone. The anime series is now airing, so there may be some newcomers! I'm happy if that's the case.

So, this is the 18<sup>th</sup> volume of the series. I've entered the final chapter as planned, but I'm beginning to think that it will be difficult to finish this in the remaining three volumes. My plan was to continue with the exposition phase, the clash phase, and the conclusion phase, but the content of this story is shaping up more like exposition. There is no one to blame for this. It's not anyone's fault, because I told you beforehand that there was a possibility that the story would be changed depending on my mood! Well, excuses are hard to come by these days.

Anyway, just the fact that the war has started in this volume is a good thing.

I don't want to talk too much about the contents of this volume, because it would spoil the story, but there you have my final version of Kagali-san. She changed a lot from her original draft, but this was all due to the fact that she looked so cute as an elf.

Actually, I had been thinking of making her a character of an unknown gender from the beginning, but the moment that the character design was released, everything was decided. It reconfirmed to me that the power of illustration is very important.

By the way, there are some discrepancies with the explanation in volume 13.5, but I hope you can understand that it is what it is. I wonder when I'll learn my lesson about being lazy when it comes to nailing down details early on. I swear, I'll be careful next time...though it's a little too late to reflect on that now that we're entering the final phase...

Well, that's about it for volume 18, so what did you think? I wrote it with the intention of making my readers happy, so if you enjoyed it, then there is no better joy than that.

If you enjoyed it, please continue to support my work, *That Time I Got Reincarnated as a Slime*. With your encouragement, I will do my best to expand the world of *Tensura* in the future.

See you soon.

**That Time I Got  
Reincarnated as a Slime 18**

Story by Fuse, Illustration by Mitz Vah

